CRASH

ZX SPECTRUM

A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
NO.49 FEBRUARY 1988
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FLYING SHARK
Riding high with Firebird fire power

IK +
Smashing style from System 3

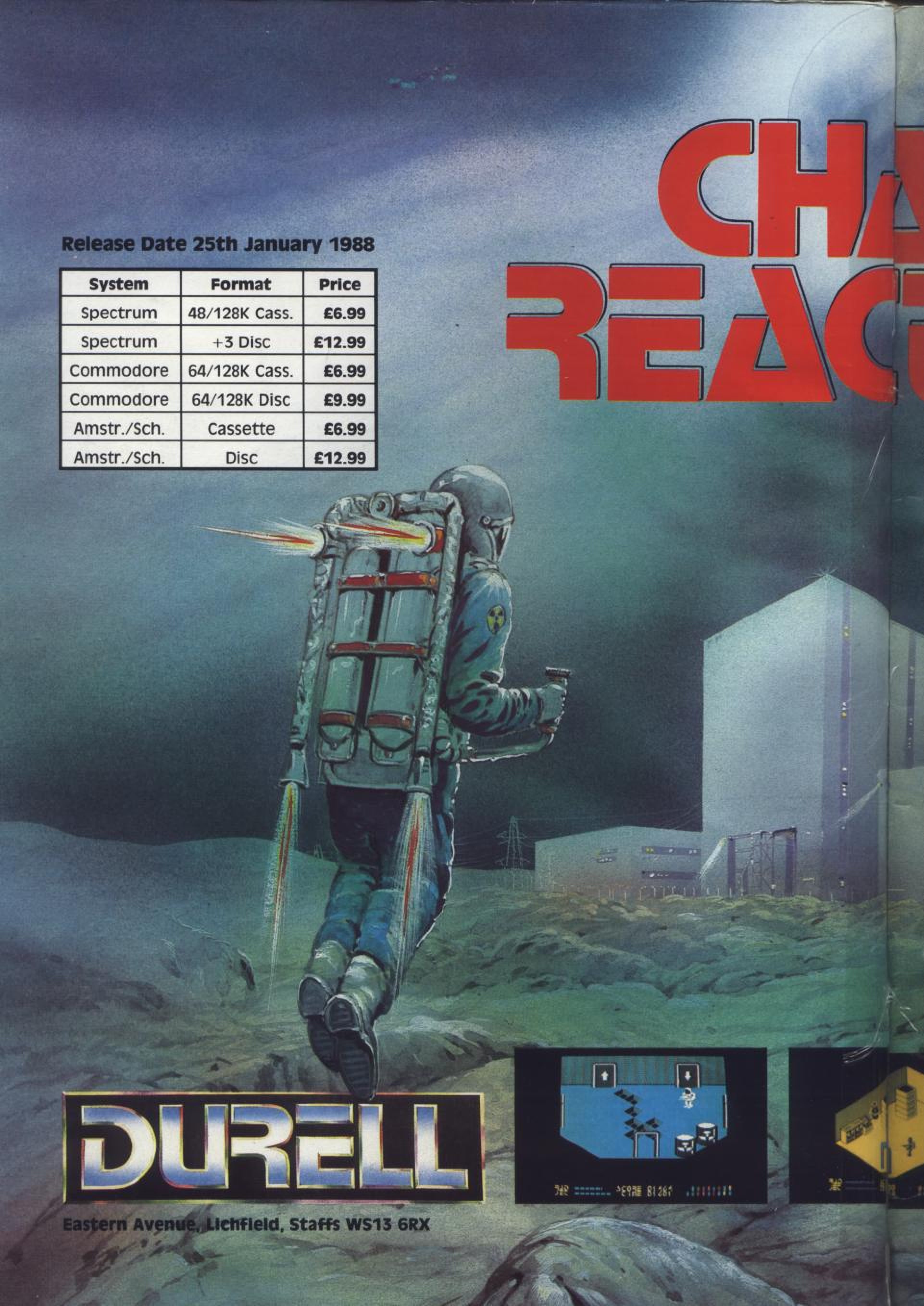
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ACTING MANAGING EDITOR **Barnaby Page**
STAFF WRITERS **Mark Caswell, Dominic Handy, Gordon Houghton, Lloyd Mangram, Ian Phillipson**
SUBEDITOR **David Peters**
PHOTOGRAPHERS **Cameron Pound, Michael Parkinson**
OFFICE **Frances Mable, Glenys Powell**

TECHNICAL WRITERS **Simon N Goodwin, Jon Bates**
PBM WRITER **Brendon Kavanagh**
STRATEGY WRITER **Philippa Irving**
EDUCATION WRITER **Rosetta McLeod**
CONTRIBUTORS **Robin Candy, Mike Dunn, Paul Evans, Dave Hawkes, Nathan Jones, Nick Roberts, Ben Stone, Paul Sumner, Bym Welthy**

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR **Roger Kean**

PRODUCTION CONTROLLER **David Western**
ART DIRECTOR **Markie Kendrick**
DESIGN **Wayne Allen**
PROCESS AND PLANNING **Jonathan Rignall** (SUPERVISOR), **Matthew Uffindell, Nick Orchard**

ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER **Roger Bennett**
ADVERTISEMENT EXECUTIVE **Andrew Smales**

SUBSCRIPTIONS **Denise Roberts**
MAIL ORDER **Carol Kinsey**

EDITORIAL AND PRODUCTION
1/2 King Street, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1AQ ☎ **(0584) 5851**
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CRASH

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ISSUE 49 FEBRUARY 1988

FEATURES



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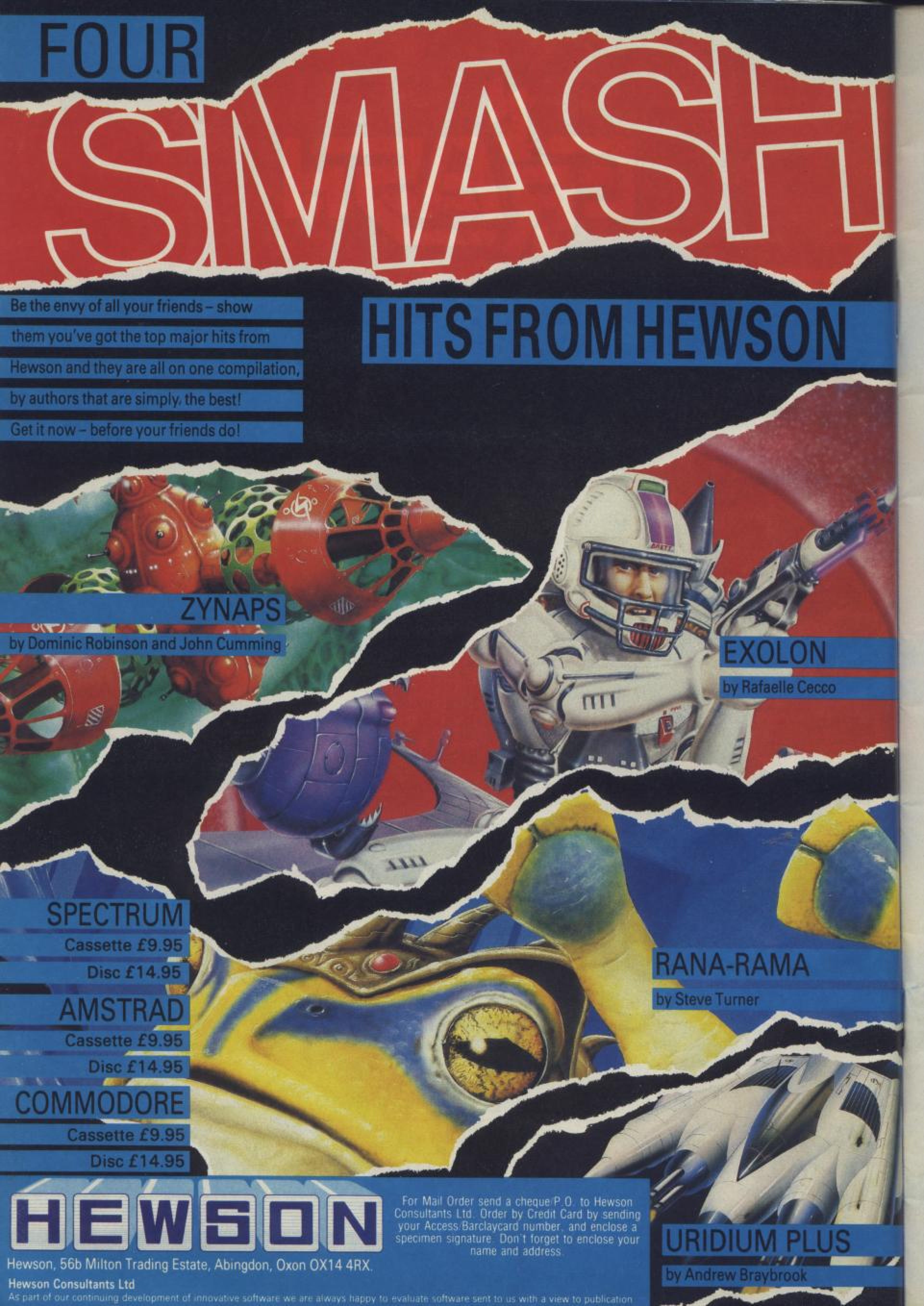


DO IT YOURSELF



'Now is the winter of our discontent,' the poet wrote – but then he didn't realise CRASH Issue 50 was going on sale February 25

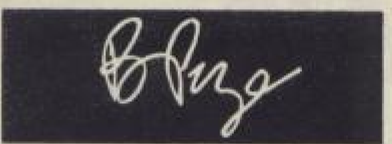




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LOOKING AHEAD

THERE'S something disorienting about January – it's suddenly easy to feel lost without a seasonal prop. Still, by the time you read this it'll be well nigh Valentine's day and the round of gimmickry can resume.

The games producers will be accused of gimmickry again this year, as the rush of tie-ins accelerates. Some software houses – most egregiously Gremlin Graphics and Piranha – are all but devoting themselves to tie-ins, it seems. And you'd hardly think the universe could take another master.

But the top games this month are good old-fashioned state-of-the-art stuff – an eminently playable martial-arts challenge from System 3 in *IK+*, an exciting flight simulator from Firebird in *Flying Shark* and a classically text-only adventure from Level 9 in *Knight Orc*.

There's an interview with the minds behind Level 9 in the new-look Adventure Trail, too – and we hope you'll write to let us know how you find that section. (Signpost and Signstumps will return next month, when there's space – and Lloyd has something defensive to say about space in the Forum . . .)

HAPPY GNU YEAR

New to CRASH this month are one game-reviewer and two Staff Writers. **Nathan Jones** from Church Stretton developed an unhealthy attachment to Mirrorsoft's *Andy Capp* soon after his arrival at the Towers, but we'll still let him come in every Saturday for re-education sessions.

Gordon Houghton joins us as a Staff Writer from Blackburn in Lancashire, via three years at Oxford studying for joint honours in horizontal scrolling and comparative arcade adventures. And **Mark Caswell**, who's been contributing the odd comment for several months, joins that small but intrepid band that roves from mag to mag.

IN THE NEXT CRASH

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REVIEWS

New year, new games

SMASHED!

HOT SHOTS 80% and over . . .

FULL INDEX

ADVERTISEMENT INDEX

KERRASH! N·E·W·S

+3 PAW

GILSOFT'S *Professional Adventure Writer* utility (97% in CRASH Issue 40) is now available on +3 disk.

Other new releases for the new model, the first Spectrum with a built-in disk drive, include Rainbird's flight simulation *Starglider* 97% in Issue 36).

And Kempston Data's £8.95 Spectrum Joystick Interface has been updated for +3-compatibility.

PRISON FOR PIRATE

A SOFTWARE PIRATE has been sent to prison for 12 months. 29-year-old Gerhard Martens of Torquay pleaded guilty to 14 different charges which included forgery and copyright infringement.

Martens had been pirating business software but the Federation Against Software Theft hopes the sentence – the first jail term for a software pirate in Britain – will deter pirates of all kinds of software.

FOR THOSE OLYMPIC MOMENTS

AFTER getting the Spectrum sports scene fit with chart-topping compilation *Game Set And Match*, **Ocean** has jumped on the Olympic bandwagon with ***ABC Sports Winter Olympics*** – a £19.95 'interactive VCR game' for two to six players. Ocean claims it's the first of its kind in Britain and points the software giant toward CD games.

Winter Olympics uses a board for play and a video for illustration – no computer – in a race through nine events from the real-life Winter Olympic Games, held this February in Calgary, Canada. Ocean Chairman David Ward describes it as a breakthrough in video board games, pointing out that in previous games 'the pictures on the screen had nothing to do with what's on the board – in them it's kind of coloured wallpaper'.

But, says Ward, *Winter Olympics* – developed by California-based specialists Three Star Group – is different because you really play rather than just watch. 'It's a halfway jump to an interactive laser disc. What it brings to the marketplace is the answer to psychologists' principal criticism of TV – that it is a passive process, that you sit there and don't do anything about it.'

So in *Winter Olympics* you sit there through a ten-to-15-second clip from award-winning ABC Sports television coverage of past Winter Olympic Games, and then take your turn on the board. At the end of the clip a grid of numbers appears on the screen, changing rapidly like the frame-counter on a video film, and when the player pauses the video it comes to rest with two numbers displayed – your pause button takes the place of dice.

Those two numbers indicate points and spaces for each of the three coloured trails – red, blue and green – on which players move across the board. Depending on what colour he's on, the player takes the appropriate number of points for the sport he's just watched and moves the appropriate number of spaces.

Each player accumulates points in every event and the game continues until all nine gold medals have been won – the first player to get 500 points in an event and pass over the appropriate gold space on the board wins that medal, the next takes the silver medal, the third the bronze medal. Medals add to the final score, and the highest score when all gold medals have been collected wins the game.

The nine events are slalom, speed skating, figure skating, cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, ski jumping, bobsled, hockey and luge (solo tobogganing).

On passing over a medal space (or one of the 'snowflake spaces') you collect an Olympic Moment card, which can give you extra points or turns, make you miss a turn or take you via a ski lift to another of the three trails – named after recent real-life Winter Olympics sites, Calgary, Sarajevo (in Yugoslavia) and Lake Placid (near New York). But disaster spaces can break your skis . . .

Ocean's Ward explains the new-style game's appeal: 'In the past VCR-based games were completely linear, with results that never varied. Once a tape was put together, there was no way to change it. The only variables in first-generation VCR games came from the cards which players picked up.

'But with this new technique, the video tape in effect changes each time the game is played. Unlike other games *Winter Olympics* MUST be played with the video tape, and will have a much longer playing life span simply because results are different each time.'

Still, *Winter Olympics* is a game of chance with very little strategy involved, and with good luck a single turn can earn you up to 10,000 points, probably enough to win the game. (At the London launch, former Miss Great Britain Debbie Greenwood beat Canadian-born David Jensen, presenter of ITV's music show *The Roxy*, 14,000 to 11,000 in an hour-long match – commenting coyly 'I've never won anything before'!)

Ocean hopes to attract computer-owners who recognise the software house's logo on the packaging. David Ward sees it as family entertainment, describing the TV as a focus of family life, a 'cool fire' to gather around in the evening.

With *Winter Olympics* Ocean joins Gremlin Graphics in the move to board games – Gremlin plans more to follow its recent *Gary Lineker Footballer Of The Year*. And the next interactive VCR game on Ocean's launch list is *MISL Soccer Shootout*, an indoor-soccer game with over 150 video clips (*Winter Olympics* has some 180), scheduled for release in March or April.

NOW IT'S *BMX NINJA!*

WHAT'S IN A NAME AT ALTERNATIVE

NOTHING'S too alternative for Alternative Software, the budget label that's shot close to the top of the sales charts without all the noise of Code Masters and Mastertronic.

Ex-biologist boss Roger Hulley studied the Spectrum-owning animal and deduced that the title sells a budget game – so now he reckons *BMX Ninja*'s sure to be a hit!

'BMX games sell extremely well and martial-arts games sell extremely well,' explains Hulley, 'so we're putting the two together for *BMX Ninja* and it's going to be a monster.

'The programmers are having a great time, all jumping up and down and saying 'Can I do that bit? Can I do that bit?'.

► **The name's the thing: Alternative Software's Roger Hulley celebrates another Piranha rerelease**



'We don't take ourselves too seriously on the games,' admits Hulley, whose Alternative label is just the tip of a software empire which also includes two distribution companies and a duplication outfit.

But there's more to sales than silly titles, he says – sometimes a subtle change can make all the difference. That's why he renamed Martech's *Uchi Mata* for its £1.99 Alternative rerelease.

'The name didn't click, so we put the sport first and our title is called *Judo Uchi Mata*, which really sells.'

It's the same story with Piranha's *Nosferatu*, one of many Piranha titles (including *Trapdoor*) which Alternative offers at budget price.

Hulley's calling it *The Vampyre, Nosferatu* – 'we're de-emphasising the word 'Nosferatu' because it doesn't do anything for us.'

Packaging packs 'em into the software shops, too, so Alternative often changes the covers of its rereleases – which include *Moon Cresta* (Incentive) and *Everyone's A Wally* (Mikro-Gen) and usually sell between 40,000 and 100,000 copies each.

'We'd never believe in putting a product out without a screenshot. And the idea is it must be *seen* to be good value for money. The proof of the pudding is in the eating and we're not going to sleep on our laurels.' (Mixing his metaphors he'll stretch to.)

Alternative's sales expert, advertising man David Palmer, agrees. 'The only way you sell a budget game is through your cover,' he stresses. 'Take a good, popular game, put a strong illustration on it and watch it shoot into the charts.

'But I've always felt that most software companies are very cynical toward their market – they trounce out this cartoony, babyish style to sell to what is essentially Adrian Mole.

'But we sell to a very wise, albeit young, audience.'

And the fans of Alternative's brightly-packaged rereleases and cheap, cheap compilations (three games for £1.99 on a Triple Decker) will soon wise up to what's in a BMX ninja game.

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The games above were reviewed in Issues 43, 44, 45, 46, 47 and 48 of CRASH, and *most* are available, but CRASH cannot guarantee that they are ready yet. If in doubt give Aggie (alias Carol Kinsey) a ring on (0584) 5620 to find out whether the delay will be longer than 28 days.

AND THEN THERE'S . . .

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SUPER HANG-ON

Producer: **Electric Dreams**
Retail price: **£9.99**
Authors: **Chris Wood and ZZKJ, from a Sega coin-op**

When you had that Raleigh with stabiliser wheels, no-one would have thought you'd come to this – crouched over a racing motorbike with wheels about to lay rubber across four continents.

You wait at the race's start line, cool, calm and collected. Suddenly the jostling group of bikies that surrounds you is away, scorching off into the distance. You accelerate after them, watching closely the speedo at the top of the screen. When the crucial figure of 280 kph is reached, the bike's turbo kicks in. Then you begin to eat up the other riders as if they were on punctured tricycles.

You're loath to ease off the throttle, knowing that to do so costs you valuable time, but sometimes the situation demands sharp braking. The bike can use all of the road, switching from side to side to avoid the other bikes and apex through the bends of the track.

If your steering isn't all that it might be and you touch another rider, or slip off the main track, speed is lost – and that means valuable time is gone too. And you can't do anything about riders who strike you as they come burning through, losing you yet more seconds.

Worse still, should you make contact with one of the wayside features, an advertising hoarding, a tree or a pile of boulders, you have a wipeout on your hands and the bike is destroyed. No serious injury is involved and you are quickly on a spare, but now time is even tighter.

NICK

" Super Hang-On could easily be called Enduro Racer II – I can find hardly any differences. Riding a road bike rather than a dirt bike doesn't change the game much. Still, there's more colour here than in Enduro Racer – of course that causes some attribute problems, but the extra reality is worth it. If you already own Enduro Racer there's no point in getting this, but it's worth a look if you're shopping for a motorbike sim. "

86%

The clock ticks away all too fast at the head of the screen. Flash beneath the finish gantry before that zero second arrives, and you're on to the next stage with any remaining time carried over. Each successive track asks more of the rider, daring him to go faster and to take more chances before the ever-lowering time limit is reached.

If you successfully ride the six tracks of Africa, you and your machine are transferred to Asia (ten stages), then to America (14 stages), and finally to Europe with its 18 tracks. Each new continent is a greater test of skill than the last, with points building up as you wheelie your way around the world.

After all this, if you feel your bike lacks a little something, you can pep up its capabilities by increasing the sensitivity of its handling – and off you go once more.

PAUL

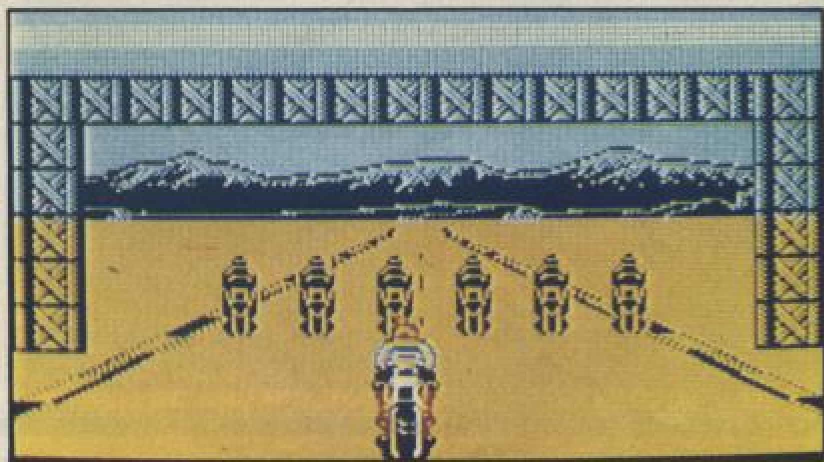
" After seeing US Gold/Epyx's appalling Super Cycle **I was afraid** Super Hang-On **might be another such arcade great ruined by thoughtlessness. But though it's certainly not up to the standards of** Enduro Racer, **it's an incredible achievement.**

The front end offers a cleverly-constructed array of options, though I found only one combination useful: high sensitivity with attributes off. And once you find the right settings the game is a joy, both playable and addictive.

The levels of difficulty are just right; it's pretty easy to finish the first two African tracks in your first session, but to get any further requires perseverance and restrained use of the turbo.

If you've been looking forward to Super Hang-On **you won't be disappointed. "**

85%



► *Super Hang-On*: **'superb' challenge from a Sega coin-op**

► **Tricky riding as the clock ticks on**



BYM

" The chance to set your bike's response does a lot for Super Hang-On **– you can ride like you want to. And though there are set angles for taking corners, that makes it easier to assess how to tackle each one. The major problem I had was with drunken drivers cutting me up. "**

83%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: large detailed bikes, with jerky but fast animation
Sound: super biking effects
Options: to colour or not to colour, that is the question . . . plus three levels of control response
General rating: not quite up to *Enduro Racer*, but a superb and challenging coin-op conversion

Presentation	87%
Graphics	86%
Playability	76%
Addictive qualities	85%
OVERALL	**85%**

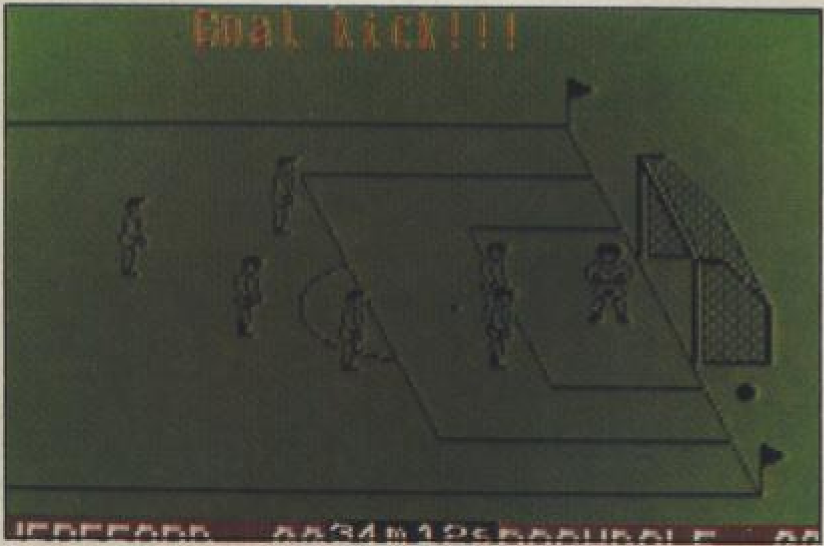
GARY LINEKER'S SUPERSTAR SOCCER

Producer: **Gremlin Graphics**
Retail price: **£7.99**
Author: **Chris Kerry**

In direct competition with Ocean's *Matchday II* comes Gremlin's latest big-name licence, *Gary Lineker's Superstar Soccer*. Similar to Mr Ritman's game, this gives the player the dual aspects of management and real playing action, but approaches them quite differently.

The game is structured into four divisions of sixteen teams, with the player's team starting in the fourth, playing both league and cup games. Any of the four division tables can be examined, as well as a teams' statistics, set-up and list of players.

► **Cameron's rooting for local Hereford . . .**



When the player starts a match, he can change the control of the coach, centre forward and goalie to human or computer. If all three are set to computer control, the player can elect not to watch the match, but just let the computer work out the result.

The player only has one footballer to control for the whole match – the computer follows the action on the ball, which means that the player's centre can be a long way off screen. When the player has the ball, he can either pass, by holding the joystick towards a player and tapping the button, or shoot, by holding down the button.

A knock-out league cup competition is also held during the season, giving the player a chance to go for a trophy as well as the league title.

NICK

" What has happened to the software industry? There are more football games on the market than I've had hot dinners – and that's saying something! Unfortunately Gary Lineker's Superstar Soccer **holds nothing new. The game isn't very well laid out, and the options menu is cluttered with text. The playing screen isn't any better, with poorly animated and difficult-to-see footballers running around the garish pitch.** Gary Lineker's Superstar Soccer **is a sort of cross between** Football Director **and** Matchday II **– but hasn't the flair or playability of either. "**

54%

BYM

" Not having control over the whole team is strange – you can't even tell which player is under your control, making the action hard to follow, especially when you're at one end of the pitch and the ball is at the other! It also means that you have a much less significant part in the game – in Matchday II **you have a feeling of complete control and are able to set up moves how you want to. In the light of** Matchday II, Gary Lineker's Superstar Football **is a very poor offering – I know which one I'd rather buy.**

33%

EYE

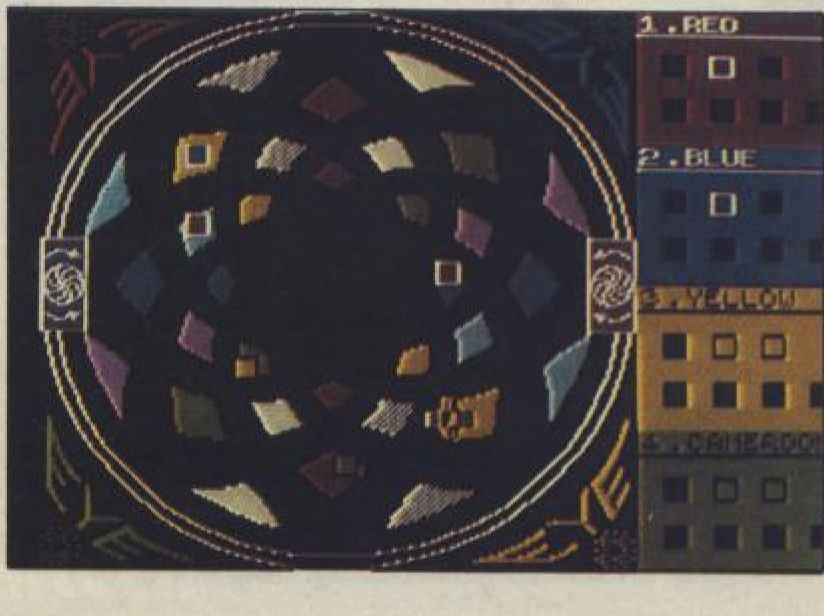
Producer: **Endurance Games**
Retail price: **£9.95 cassette**
Authors: **Kerry Kevill, Iris Luttring and Billy Barry**

The computer version of *Eye* follows the structure and content of the board game, but provides computer opponents to pit your wits against.

The action is played on a 'board' of 32 coloured sections, formed by two opposing sets of spirals lying within a circle. Rotating the spirals creates a shifting moire pattern and causes different coloured sections to appear in one of four set patterns.

To win the game, a player must place a specified number of counters in the corresponding colour sections on the board. The number of counters used depends upon the number of players, and the program accounts for between one and four participants, either human or electronic.

► **Something's gone off colour in the mind's** *Eye*



BYM

" Eye **is a completely new concept, but once mastered, there's little to keep you playing. The computer opponents are quite challenging, but overall I found that the gameplay was rather samey, and lacked any excitement or thrills. Playing the game with a couple of human opponents is fun, but I wouldn't recommend the computer version of** Eye **if you're likely to be playing it on your own. "**

43%

MIKE

" I've played the board game a couple of times and, to be quite honest, can't say that I found it particularly enjoyable. The computer version plays very similarly, and offers little more than some computer opponents. The gameplay isn't much fun, and after a couple of sessions I grew increasingly bored. Eye **is beautifully packaged, but is very overpriced for what it offers. If you really want to play** Eye, **buy the board game. "**

48%

PAUL

" If anything, Eye **improves on the original board game, but as far as I'm concerned, the programmers have made the best of a bad job – the board game is nothing to write home about. What makes** Eye **so unlikeable is the lack of variety – there's only a few things to do and most of the time is spent waiting for the computer to take its turn. There are plenty of good computer board game interpretations on the Spectrum – but I'm afraid** Eye **isn't one of them. "**

48%

ROBIN

" Gary Lineker's Superstar Soccer **is very much in the vein of** Football Manager. **Managing a football team and guiding it to the top of the league does have its appeal, but I prefer to control the action on the field rather than off it. The graphics are barely average, with very little to make them stand out. On the whole this is a good football management game, but** Matchday II **is still the definitive football game as far as I'm concerned.** "

67%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: Cluttered text on the options screen, and poor during a game
Sound: lacking
Options: extensive menu system, with plenty of on-screen information
General rating: a disappointing football game which falls far short of its potential

Presentation	50%
Graphics	44%
Playability	47%
Addictive qualities	44%
OVERALL	**52%**



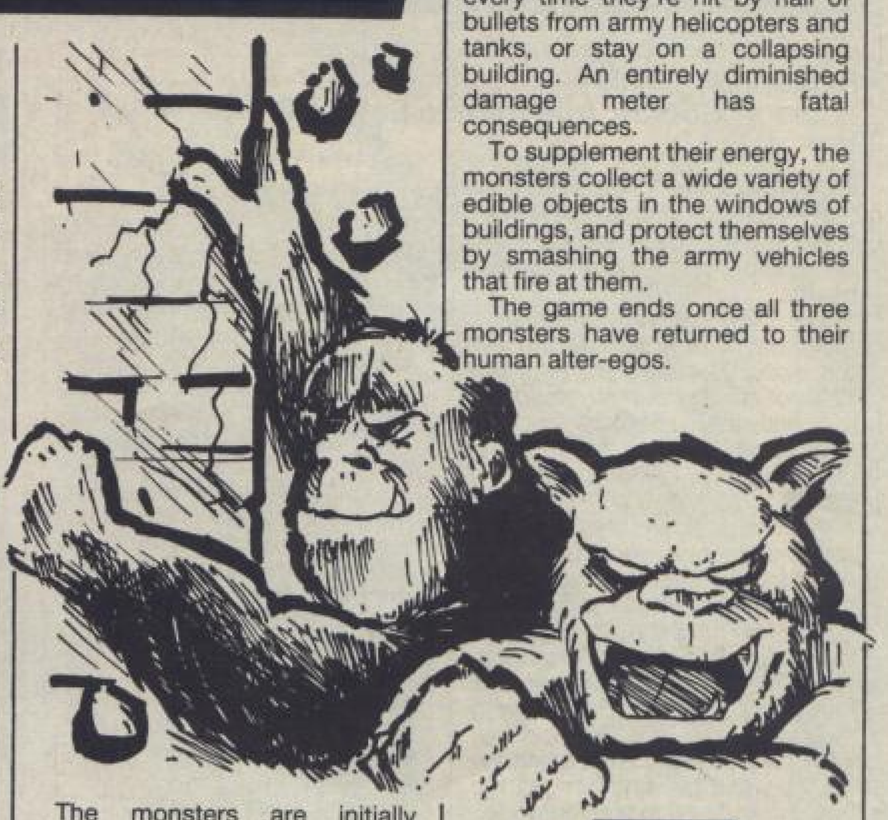
COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: a clear representation of the board game
Sound: simple spot effects and title tune
Options: definable keys and 1-4 players option
General rating: an average conversion of a none-too-impressive board game

Presentation	71%
Graphics	56%
Playability	48%
Addictive qualities	49%
OVERALL	**50%**

RAMPAGE

Producer: **Activision**
Retail price: **£9.99**
Authors: **Bob Pape**



In yet another big licensing deal, Activision have bought the cult arcade game *Rampage* to the home computer market.

Between one and three players take the part of mutated monsters George, Lizzie or Ralph, as they set about destroying a city full of buildings.

BYM

" **Although Activision have successfully included the three player option in this conversion, things get cramped both on and off screen. To be honest, I find the gameplay rather dull – there's no chance of annihilating the armed forces, and consequently** Rampage **just becomes a race to find good food, with nothing to do except avoid crumbling buildings. The action gets dull quite quickly, and even with a couple of other players to spice things up, there's little to keep you playing.** "

65%

The monsters are initially dropped onto the screen, and are confronted by several buildings, all of which are destroyed to advance to the next level. This is achieved by climbing up the sides of buildings, and either smashing out the windows, or knocking holes in the side. Once enough structural damage has been inflicted, it collapses in a cloud of dust.

All three monsters have damage meters, which are decreased every time they're hit by hail of bullets from army helicopters and tanks, or stay on a collapsing building. An entirely diminished damage meter has fatal consequences.

To supplement their energy, the monsters collect a wide variety of edible objects in the windows of buildings, and protect themselves by smashing the army vehicles that fire at them.

The game ends once all three monsters have returned to their human alter-egos.

NICK

" **Graphically,** Rampage **is really good – skyscrapers, roads, railway tracks and trees are all excellently drawn, and the backdrops are great, with pylons and transmitters to add to the realism. The basic idea is one of chaos – you have to bite and punch pieces out of the buildings and eat passing cars. The monsters are all as violent as each other, which can cause a problem when one turns against you! In some of the windows of buildings there are little people which give you extra energy if you eat them! I thoroughly enjoyed playing** Rampage, **and with an extra player or two it becomes even more fun – smashing!** "

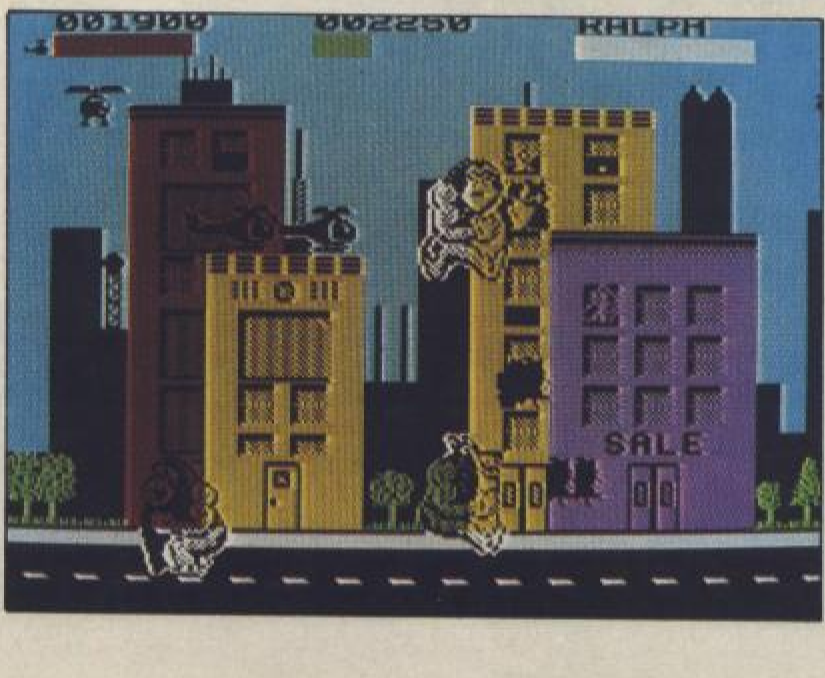
80%

MIKE

" Rampage **is a pretty jolly game, and boasts some very bright graphics. Some of the screens are very attractive (as attractive as half a dozen multi-storey buildings can be, I suppose) and the characters are great. The gameplay appeals to my vandal and sadistic instincts, and going around smashing whole buildings down and eating people is highly enjoyable. Then there's the extra fun of being buried under rubble . . . However, the gameplay lacks variety and consequently I doubt its long-term appeal.** "

62%

► **A beauty of a beast**



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: large, intricately-detailed monsters with colourful backgrounds
Sound: stomping and bashing effects only
Options: 1-3 players
General rating: a competent conversion that should appeal to fans of the original

Presentation	78%
Graphics	73%
Playability	67%
Addictive qualities	65%
OVERALL	**69%**

FIRETRAP

Producer: **Electric Dreams**
Retail price: **£9.99**
Authors: **Source, from a Data East coin-op**

There's a burning skyscraper down on Arcadeville's main street, and the fire is spreading to the neighbouring blocks.

The player takes control of a firefighter who is sent to put out the blaze. The hero starts at the base of the first tower equipped only with a fire-resistant suit, jet-pack and water cannon, and climbs up the vertically scrolling building.

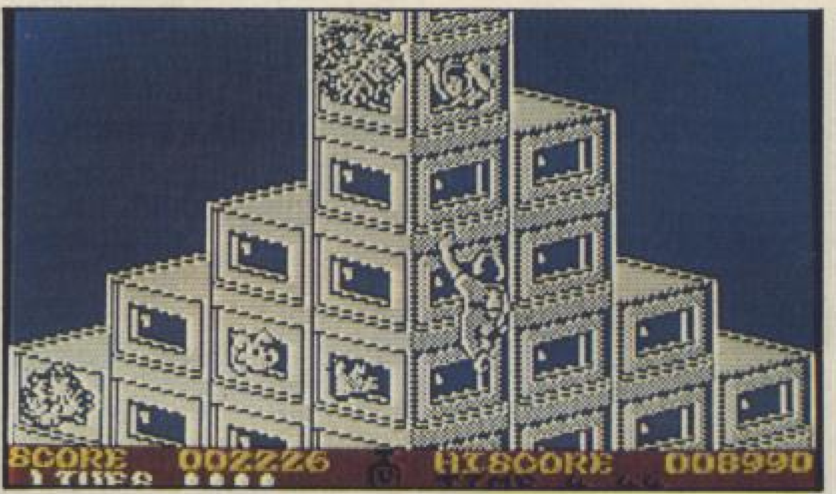
Women and dogs are trapped in the conflagration, and are rescued when touched, the hero supplying them with a parachute so they may float to safety. He also extinguishes fires with his cannon, revealing either a cash bonus or a bonus icon. These endow him with the ability to fire horizontally, giving added protection, or initiate his jet-pack, blasting him up the building and saving precious time.

As he climbs, the fireman avoids a continuous stream of debris that rains down on him, and negotiates impassable areas such as flagpoles and smooth patches that give no grip. Should he be hit by an object or touch any fire, the character falls several stories and loses a life. The game ends when all his five lives are lost.

NICK

" Firetrap seems simple and boring to begin with, but further investigation proves this wrong. The graphics are adequate, with some cute touches like the little dogs (ah!) that have to be rescued and sent down to the ground on a parachute. The only thing that I didn't like about the game is the lack of variety – to me the only difference between tower blocks was their colour, and that the fire gets more severe on higher levels. Firetrap is a fun change from the usual violence or aliens, but may become a little tedious after a few towers have been extinguished. "

71%



► **Stop the home fires burning in Electric Dreams's slick, addictive** *Firetrap*

PAUL

" Electric Dreams have been a bit quiet of late and it's good to see them come back with some new games – Nihilist last issue and now Firetrap. The screen display has been planned just right – there's not too much visible, but just enough to give you a (fire) fighting chance. What impressed me most was the vast about of detailed graphics being moved around the screen very quickly and smoothly. Everything about Firetrap is slick, and to cap it all the gameplay is very addictive! "

86%

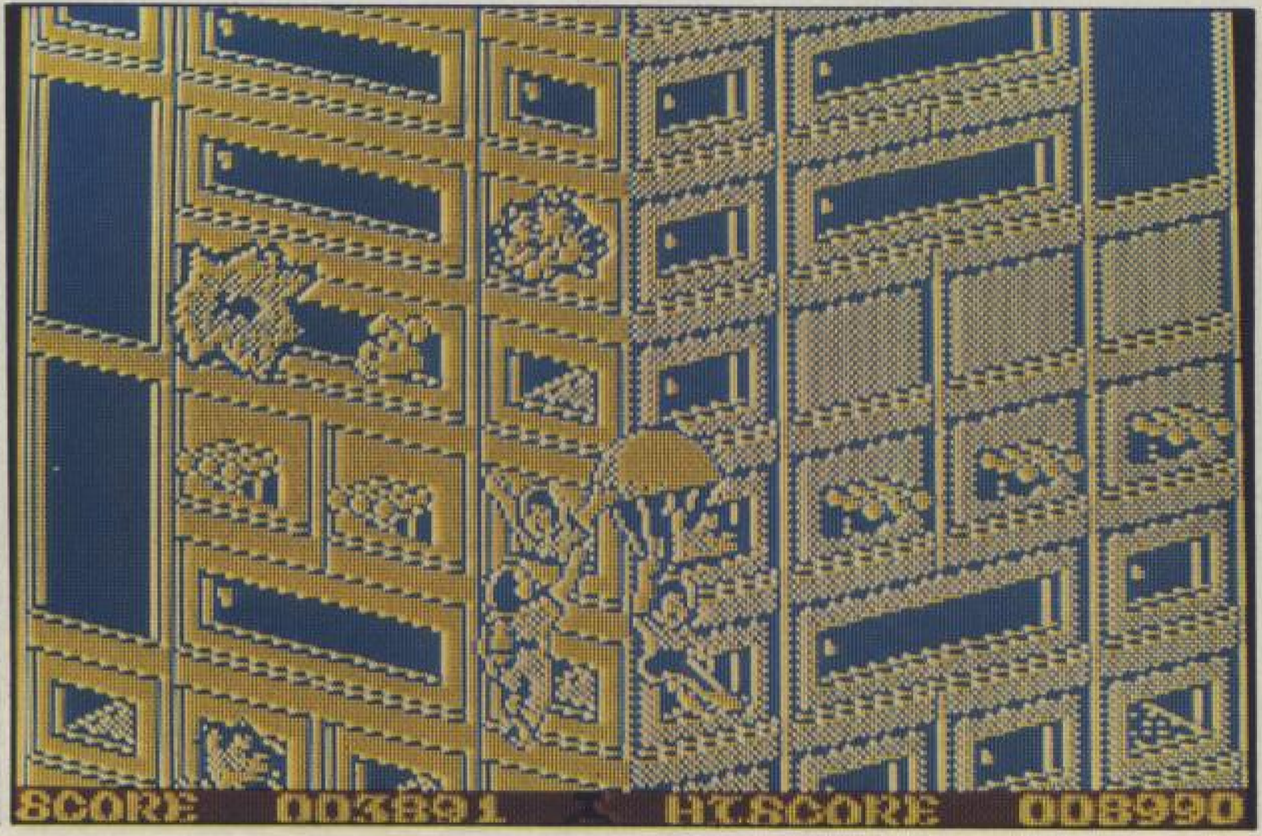
MIKE

" I've got to give it to Data East – they've come up with a very novel 3D game. The gameplay isn't the fastest I've ever played, but it provides a challenge and is fairly addictive. The graphics are very well drawn and the characters detailed and clear. But there is one snag – the fire chief and the falling objects tend to blend into the building, which can make things difficult on higher levels. If you're after an unusual and enjoyable game – look up Firetrap. "

77%



► **Women and dogs first**



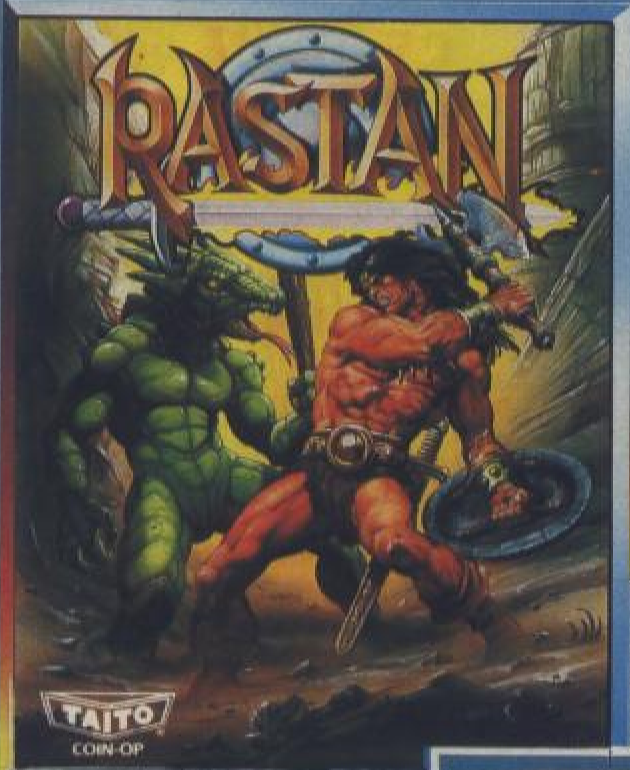
COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: great – well drawn and smooth, although some of the characters are occasionally difficult to see
Sound: jolly title screen ditty and jingles, but very limited in-game sound effects
Options: definable keys
General rating: a competent and addictive conversion of a novel arcade machine

Presentation	75%
Graphics	80%
Playability	77%
Addictive qualities	78%
OVERALL	**78%**

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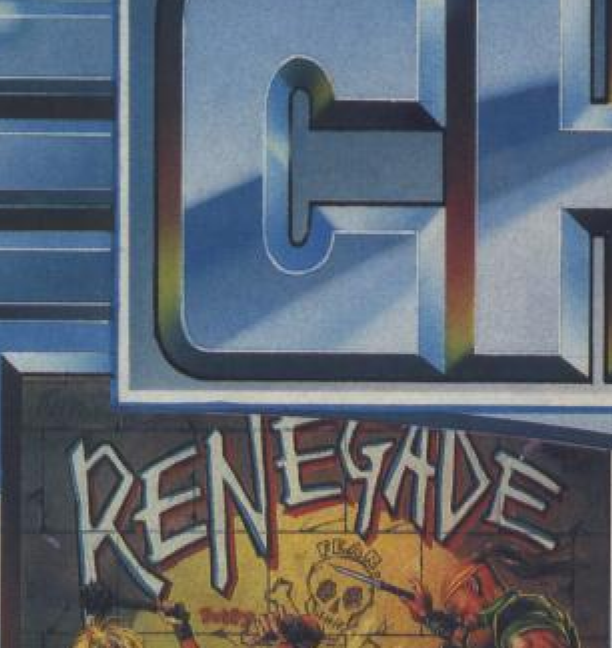




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CHAM





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Having survived the bloodsucking monsters of the first phase, you progress on to the actual Road itself.
This is where the fun really begins. You will meet vampires, two and three headed monsters – the head will fly at you on its own, just when you think you are gaining the upper hand.
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Reviews

TOUR DE FORCE

Producer: **Gremlin Graphics**
Retail price: **£7.99**
Author: **Tim Miller**

Across the continents of the world you flash on your bicycle made for one. Bum in the air, head down, you pedal over a variety of courses, competing against the clock and ten other competitors in your race.

But this cycling extravaganza is not just a simple matter of athletic prowess and saddle soreness – the course is full of obstructions and unsportsmanlike people who want you and your bike upended and temporarily out of the race.

From the road s surface pop barriers and obtrusive posts; coiled snakes strike; squat sumo wrestlers block the highway and groups of thugs shuffle from roadside to roadside.

Ramps also obstruct the way ahead, but these can be used to leap over obstacles and ahead of the competition.

If you have three crashes (each is indicated by a nifty piece of advertising for a well-known national computer magazine) you're out of the race for good.

Your position is shown on a map below the main, horizontally-scrolling course screen. And your placing is vital, for only by winning a stage of the race can you move on to the next, held in a far distant country.

So you must concentrate on speed, avoid the obstacles – and



► **Pedal power:** *Tour De Force*

abandon the few moral scruples that you have by taking other riders off with some choice jostling.

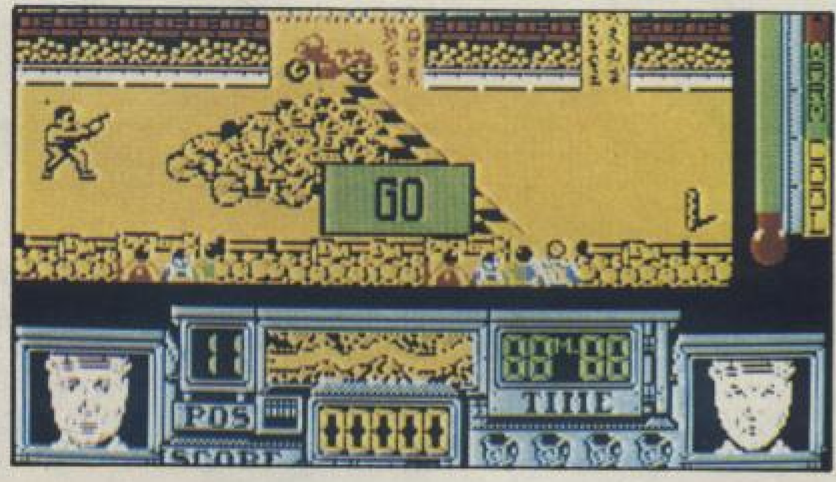
But bike racing is hot and thirsty work. To finish the race on a bike rather than a stretcher you'll have to take on drinks by directing the bike through the bottles, glasses and casks that stand on the tarmac.

MIKE

" Tour De Force **is like a jazzed-up full-price version of Mastertronic's** Milk Race, **but the jazzing up hasn't added to the playability. The first level of** Tour De Force **is difficult, and the start is confusing; it takes quite a few seconds to work out which of the 11 riders is you. There's not much gameplay to keep you going beyond the start line, either. "**

53%

► **'Humorous and detailed graphics on a fast-scrolling road'**



PAUL

" This makes a pleasant change from the usual arcade adventures and beat/shoot-'em-ups that have appeared on the Spectrum lately – and it's also a good game. Though it's not a direct tie-in with the Tour De France, Tour De Force **has all the features of the real-life race (apart from the dulcet tones of Channel 4 commentator Phil Ligget): people all over the road, Coke bottles and even maniac cyclists who try and kick you off your bike. The realism gets confusing when your rider is lost among the crowd of other bikes, though. Sound is used well – the different countries where you race are identified by national tunes – and it's good to see Gremlin Graphics diversifying from the usual genres with this delightfully playable game. "**

78%

KNIGHTMARE

Producer: **Activision**
Retail price: **£9.99**
Authors: **MD Software, JP Dean, EM Dean and Focus Creative Enterprises**

Knightmare is a TV licence with a difference, based on the ITV/Anglia TV series which starred school-age role-players in a fantasy castle of computer graphics. In the Activision game, a sad distressed knight has been cast through time and space to a place he does not know, and he must survive.

He can ask things, look, dig and even drink, selecting commands and responses to other characters' suggestions from a multiple-choice set.

As the knight progresses through these dank dungeon rooms, he encounters people, and there are beasts who can help him by answering his questions. Like him, they talk in speech bubbles. But he will also encounter goblins, snakes, and bats.

A burning candle at the side of the screen shows how much life the knight has left.

More information is available from two oracles – but one is helpful and the other is malicious. And because it's not a detective game, you cannot cross-question them about their replies.

If the knight survives long enough, he can gather Merlin's Magic. There are many spells, and only by trial and error can you find

BEN

" This one's a toughie – it took me ages to get out of the first two screens. Knightmare **has great graphics but the pace is a little too fast. Though the word commands are difficult to use at first they soon become easier, and very fast. Still,** Knightmare **will take a long time to master – which may or may not be a recommendation. "**

60%

► **A hard day's knight in** *Knightmare*



PAUL

" Knightmare **is very complex, and though most of the actions you must take make sense, when you have to repeat things it gets monotonous. Visually** Knightmare **is very attractive, with the individuals detailed and accurately drawn – and the oracles have a very commanding appearance. The main fault of** Knightmare **is that it's very, very hard – and will prove a great challenge to the most capable adventurers. "**

77%

BYM

" Tour De Force **uses portrait graphics where plan-view splodges could have been expected – but there still isn't enough displayed on each screen for you to avoid certain objects. You have to memorise the course, or go too slowly to get a reasonable finishing position. Still, there's something about collision with stationary obstacles that just boosts the addictiveness.** "

68%

A countdown at the bottom of the screen shows how you're doing for time.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: humorous and detailed monochrome graphics (avoiding clash) on a fast-scrolling road
Sound: national tunes for each country, with crash'n'bang in-game effects
General rating: original and addictive gameplay

Presentation	76%
Graphics	71%
Playability	67%
Addictive qualities	67%
OVERALL	**66%**

BYM

" **A nightmare indeed – there's one correct response to every situation, no variation is permitted, and the system of** Knightmare **soon gets too dictatorial.** "

48%

out what they do. One squashes the nasties, but not all are so useful; if things get really desperate, resort to hurling bricks at the goblins.

COMMENTS

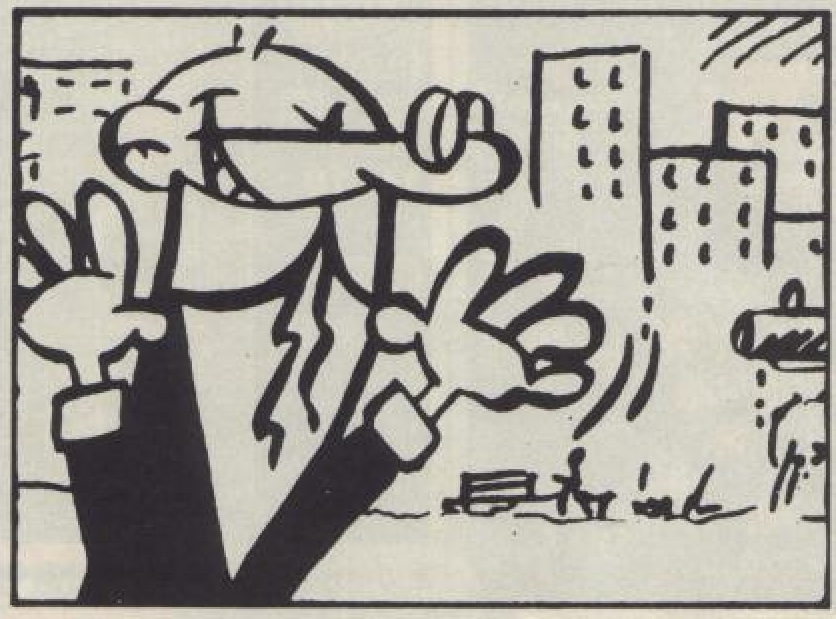
Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: book-like presentation, 'turning pages' from one screen to the next, using isometric views of monochromatic rooms
Sound: uninteresting
General rating: beautifully presented, but too difficult to reward most players

Presentation	67%
Graphics	75%
Playability	56%
Addictive qualities	68%
OVERALL	**62%**

CLEVER & SMART

Producer: **Magic Bytes**
Retail price: **£8.99**
Authors: **Volker Marohn, Olaf Marohn and Holger Ahrens**

Clever and Smart are two German cartoon characters now on the Spectrum screen – a pair of private eyes, complementing one another with their multifarious talents. Clever is master of disguise and can slip into something a little more unrecognisable to complete his investigations. Smart, his ever-present chum, is the intellectual of the two.



In this licence released by Magic Bytes, one of Ariolasoft's many new labels, Dr Bacterius has been kidnapped, and the two have been hired to find him.

You start off in the streets of a town. There Clever and Smart can move among the buildings, investigating and entering those they find of interest. There are numerous flats, restaurants, shops, the kindergarten, a prison, and phone boxes which can pass on useful messages.

Clever and Smart get paid in advance, so they have money to purchase useful things and eat out in restaurants (hunger is an ever-present problem). The money won't last long, but they can live on the edge of the law, enter a flat and steal a chequebook, forging the owner's signature to draw more cash.

But there are hazards on the street, such as killer cars and the occasional bomb.

Roaming around the town may produce valuable clues, but going underground may be even more worthwhile. Enter the sewer system, locate the telephone cables, and Clever and Smart can start listening to telephone conversations. Like any other sewer, this one has rats, and contact with rats makes the two heroes hungry (if not logical). They can deter rats by wearing rat suits, but if the cat comes they've got real problems.

Locating a kidnap victim is hard enough at the best of times, and what with hunger, stolen chequebooks, sewers, and remembering the names of *all* Ariolasoft's labels (whatever happened to Viz Design?), Clever and Smart have a lot to contend with.

► *Clever & Smart*: **neither**



CRITICISM

● " *Clever & Smart* is one of the weirdest games I've had the misfortune to play recently. It's difficult to get into, because the documentation is so bad, and once you do work out what's going on it's boring. The nice title is about all that *Clever & Smart* has got going for it – and that's a shame because the idea is fairly sound, albeit not original. "
BEN **27%**

● " Clever & Smart **is weird – it takes a while to work out what's going on and I'm not sure the effort is worth it. The graphics are colourful but on the whole very simplistic, and the animation of the two characters is unrealistic, though the sound is effective. *Clever & Smart* isn't too hard, but it's boring.** "
ROBIN **44%**

● " *If you're a maze-minded maniac this is for you.* Clever & Smart *is totally maze-oriented, so it isn't Bym-compatible, and the hyperactive characters don't add any the enjoyment. I would find grovelling around in real sewers much more exciting than trying to take bearings on the blank walls in this game.* "
BYM **65%**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: large, colourful and simplistic graphics
Sound: no music but effective spot FX
General rating: an odd and rather boring game, licensed from German cartoon characters whose twee humour may not appeal to the British market

Presentation	58%
Graphics	47%
Playability	42%
Addictive qualities	28%
OVERALL	**45%**

FLYING SHARK



Producer: **Firebird**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **Dominic Robinson and John Cumming of Graftgold**

In Firebird's latest Taito coin-op conversion, the player gets the chance to take to the skies in the Flying Shark, a World War II biplane, and fly a solo mission into enemy territory.

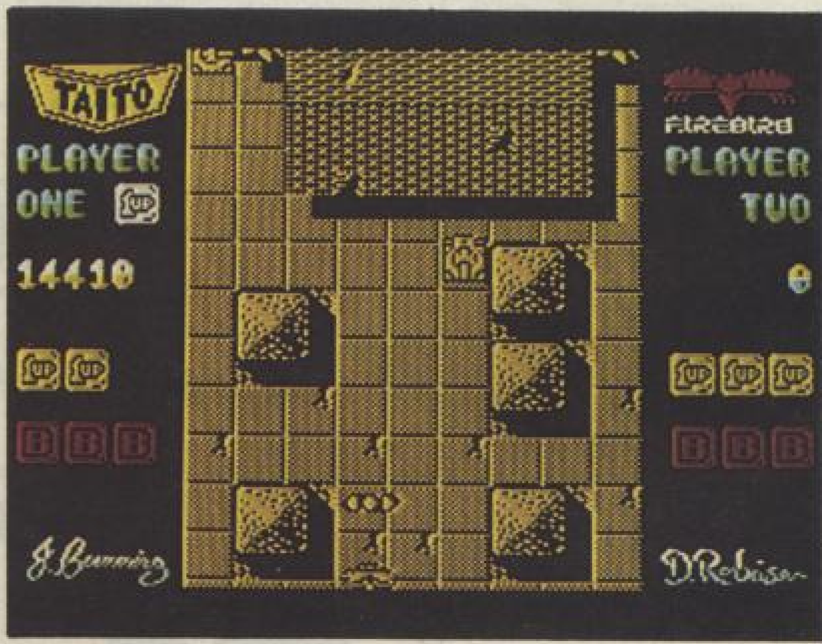
The action is played over a vertically scrolling backdrop, with squadrons of enemy fighters flying in to attack from the top of the screen. The ground is littered with gun emplacements, and tanks and ships attempt to blast you out of the sky with a volley of well-aimed shots.

The Flying Shark is equipped with a double-barrelled gun and an unlimited supply of ammunition to blast the enemy. This firepower is increased when the floating symbol dropped occasionally by the last aeroplane in a squadron is collected. To supplement the guns are a limited supply of smart bombs which destroy everything on screen.

There are five levels to conquer, with further levels including confrontations above the high seas against missile-spitting battle ships and patrol boats.

The player starts off with a fleet of three planes, and extra ones are earned at 50,000 and 150,000 points, and for every 150,000 points thereafter.





► 'Extremely detailed objects on a smoothly-scrolling background'

BEN

" Flying Shark **is certainly a fast shoot-'em-up, and boasts plenty of action – but I did find the small playing area and the monochromatic graphics a little off-putting. Another annoying point is the fact that the attack patterns never vary from game to game, though to be fair there's far too many to memorise. Still, if you like shoot-'em-ups, give** Flying Shark **a go.** "

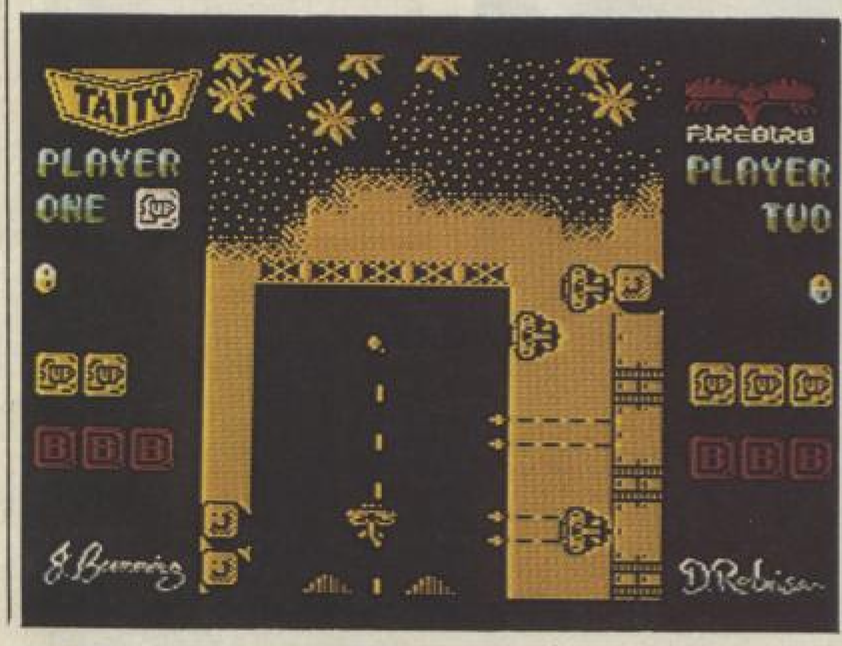
82%

PAUL

" **Authors Cumming and Robinson must have rattled this one off at a fair pace! It seems like only yesterday that these two were coming out with 'original' games at Hewson. They may have lost their originality at Firebird, but they've still come out with a superbly playable and terribly addictive game. The action is fast and the graphics attractive, and the only thing lacking is a decent tune. The Graftgold/Firebird combination seems to have worked very well here!** "

85%

► **'Another great shoot-'em-up':** *Flying Shark*



DAVE

" **I've never seen the arcade game, but if this conversion is any thing to go by, the coin-op must be something special. Firebird have put together a marvellous game, which looks and plays very much like** 1942, **with the objective being to advance as far forward as possible and shoot every object that moves. One minor annoyance is that the plane is the same colour as the surroundings, but nevertheless that niggle doesn't stop** Flying Shark **being one of the best arcade conversions I've ever played.** "

87%

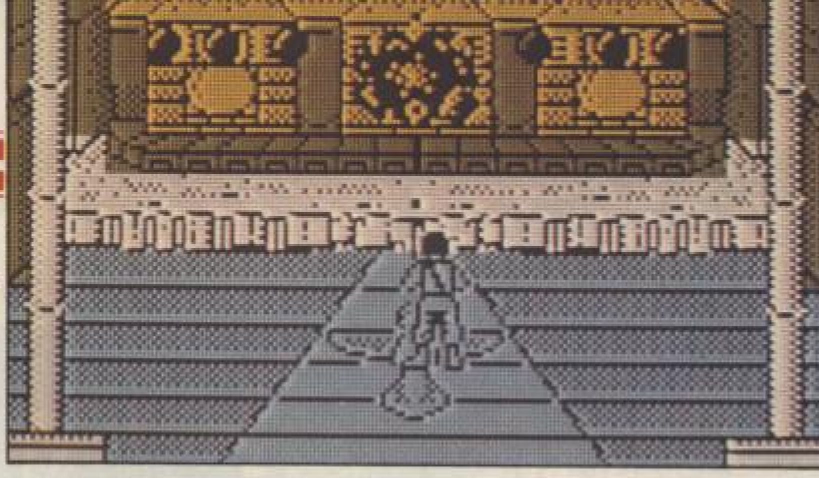
COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: extremely detailed monochrome objects with smoothly-scrolling background
Sound: effective gunshot and explosion noises
Options: definable keys
General rating: another great shoot-'em-up from the Robinson/Cumming partnership

Presentation	81%
Graphics	80%
Playability	85%
Addictive qualities	89%
OVERALL	**85%**


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TOP GUN
The "TOP GUN" game puts you in the pilot's seat of an F-14 jet fighter. 3-D vector graphics and split screen display allow one or two players to combat head to head or against the computer. Your armaments in this nerve-tingling aerial duel are heat seeking missiles and 20mm rapid fire cannon. Many skills have to be brought in to play such as reflexes, manoeuvring ability and accuracy to become the best of the best. "Top Gun" mavericks enter the danger zone!
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THE GREAT ESCAPE
The year is 1942, the place Germany. War has broken out and you have been captured and placed in a high security P.O.W. camp. Victory may be far away, so it is your duty to escape, but this will not be easy. It will take careful planning and much patience, culminating in a skilful and resourceful implementation. In the camp you are closely guarded but while you follow the daily routine you will need to slip away unnoticed to reconnoitre the situation and collect tools and materials necessary for your chosen escape route. There are many avenues of escape, some difficult, all certainly dangerous and each one requiring different skills or equipment.
Game Design Copyright Denton Designs 1986
Screen shots taken from various computer formats
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Reviews



► 'Rubbish graphics'?

GRYZOR

Producer: **Ocean**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **P Owens, M Jones**

Those sneaky Durrs from the distant planet Suna have set up a secret base on Earth, where they begin their terrible plan to take control of the world's weather conditions by building a huge atmosphere processing plant.

If the Durrs succeed in initiating a new Ice Age, the resulting chaos would provide the ideal situation for the aliens to overthrow the human race. The Durrs must be stopped at all costs.

Lance Gryzor has been chosen to enter the alien processing plant, and find and destroy its control room and the alien mother ship. To accomplish this he must force his way through two scrolling sections of enemy outposts before blasting a hole in the wall of the processing plant and moving inside.

Once in the complex, a map becomes available which Gryzor can follow to lead him through the labyrinth of tunnels as he makes his way through the plant. However, passage is continually hampered by force fields, automatic weapons systems and alien guards which threaten to remove one of Lance's six lives.

Gryzor protects himself by using his rifle which can be topped up with extra ammunition by collecting weapon capsules. These become available on the destruction of the alien's weapon stores and carriers.

NATHAN

" Gryzor is a very poor game graphically, but it's surprisingly addictive. This is due to the amount of action that has been crammed into this shoot-'em-up: jumping off cliffs and bridges into enemy infested waterways, somersaulting over the various alien assassins and then blowing them to bits, infiltrating their base and then destroying it! The speed that your character is capable of is quite surprising: you can perform many different moves very quickly, which makes the action hectic and satisfying. Unfortunately the addictive nature of the game is outweighed by the rubbish graphics and sound, poor presentation and high price. "

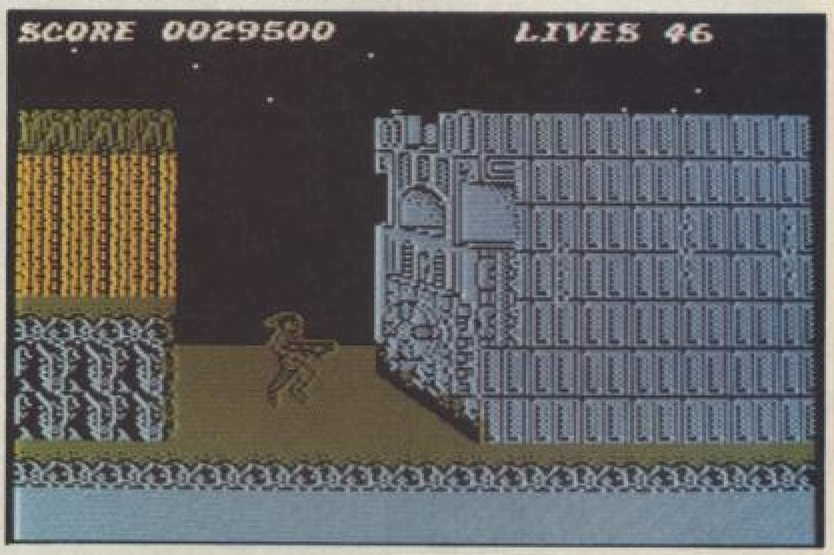
56%

DAVE

" Gryzor isn't a bad game overall: it has a fair challenge to work through, is slightly addictive and requires some skill on later screens. Colour is neatly used with only the odd clash occurring during the game, but it doesn't really contain any wonderful graphics that set it apart from the norm. Ocean have made a reasonable attempt at the conversion and with a bit more to get your teeth into they would have had a real winner. "

56%

► *Gryzor*: from the age of poor conversions



OUT RUN

Producer: **US Gold**
Retail price: **£7.99**

Sega's best-selling arcade racing game has just been converted to the Spectrum by US Gold – which claims it sold over 200,000 copies in its first two weeks, breaking all records and setting it to beat *Gauntlet* on total sales.

The objective in *Out Run* is to race a Ferrari Testarossa to one of eight destinations within the time limit.

BYM

" This must have one of the worst multiloads in history! As soon as the checkpoint is reached the action instantly freezes and the next track loads, and as soon as it's in the action starts without warning. This wouldn't be too bad if you only had to spend a couple of seconds waiting, but sometimes the wait goes on for ages, and it's easy for your attention to wander, the action to restart and the car crash. The gameplay is very slow, and the graphics and sound are generally disappointing. Out Run **isn't a great conversion. "**

63%

MIKE

" Why are US Gold doing this to me? First California Games **turns out to be a massive disappointment, and then** Out Run **– a classic arcade machine – turns out to be another disappointment. Fair enough, the 128K version has an excellent tune which doesn't appear to slow the game down, but, I ask myself, is it possible to slow it down further than it already is? The traffic on the road is jerky and badly animated, and the road itself isn't exactly the paragon of smoothness. US Gold have made the best job they could, but it just isn't enough –** Out Run **is a full-price, full-scale letdown. "**

59%

NICK

" At last Out Run **has arrived on the Spectrum! But all those of you that are expecting this to be just like the arcade version had better leave the room right now, because you're going to be so disappointed. The graphics are as well drawn as is possible on the Spectrum, and sound on the 128K is absolutely fantastic! The only thing that lets the game down is the lack of colour (which is usual for this type of race game). On the 48K you also have to load each track separately which is a mite frustrating, but the problem is resolved on the 128 because once you have loaded the track it stays in the memory.** Out Run **is an essential purchase for all you budding arcade gamesters – miss it and you'll regret it for the rest of your life! "**

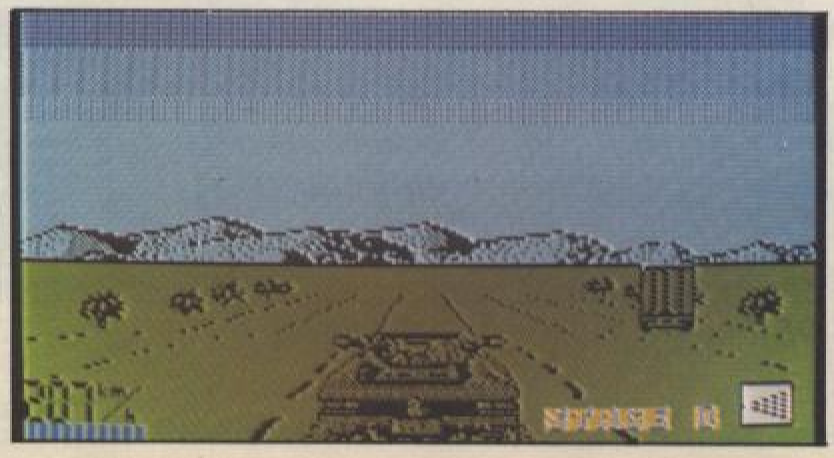
93%

The screen shows a 3-D view of the track from above and behind the player's Testarossa. The car has two gears and an accelerator, which come into effect as soon as the starting lights go green.

A digital speedometer and rev counter inform the player of the car's current performance as it negotiates dips and curves and dodges other traffic. Should the car run into the back of another vehicle it loses speed, but driving into a large roadside feature throws the car off the track and leaves the driver and his girlfriend sitting in a dazed stupor till their vehicle is placed back on the road.

The action is played against a

► Writing off another Testarossa



MIKE

" It's not really the month of good conversions, is it? The funky 128K tune on the title screen is bearable but unfortunately the game doesn't come anywhere near in terms of playability. The multiload is strangely annoying: in games like Out Run, **I could put up with it, but for some reason** Gryzor's **system really got on my nerves. The graphics are poor and badly coloured with appalling animation, and the whole game style becomes extremely annoying.** Gryzor **is poor, bad value, and unattractive: a game I don't like at all. "**

35%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: poorly drawn and animated
Sound: inviting 128K title tune; poor in-game effects
General rating: not living up to the arcade original's high standards

Presentation	49%
Graphics	45%
Playability	53%
Addictive qualities	55%
OVERALL	**49%**

constantly decreasing time limit. Failure to reach the next checkpoint within the limit ends the game. When a checkpoint is reached one of two routes is chosen, and the next part of the course loaded from tape, and extra time is added to the total so the player can progress.

When the fifth course is completed the game ends.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: the individual vehicles are accurately drawn but jerky animation detracts from this realism
Sound: superb 128K rendition of the arcade tunes, the 48K lacks such enhancements
Options: three levels of difficulty
General rating: views were split between 'the best you could have expected' and 'a poor translation of a great arcade game'

Presentation	77%
Graphics	71%
Playability	75%
Addictive qualities	75%
OVERALL	**72%**

ANDY CAPP

Producer: **Mirrorsoft**
Retail price: **£9.95**
Authors: **Blitter Animations**

Andy Capp, the flat-capped Northerner of *Daily Mirror* comic-strip fame, is once more in financial trouble. His precious dole cheque has been stolen, and his ever tolerant wife Flo is demanding money again. Andy has a week in which to retrieve his cheque AND raise some money to keep Flo off his back.

On leaving his house, our antihero finds himself in the familiar surroundings of his neighbourhood, where he walks along the many streets, and enters unlocked buildings such as the pub, police station and even the local Job Centre.

The Lancashire lad must find out who has stolen his cheque by gathering as much information as he can from the characters he meets. Poor old Andy needs a drop of Dutch courage before interrogating his friends though, so a visit to the local pub is the first order of the day. Andy's state of inebriation is constantly monitored by an 'alcometer' shown below the main screen.

Actually getting into a pub can be difficult, since the rent man frequently waits at the door to collect Andy's money. There are others who also give Andy a hard time, especially the local bobby who knows that Andy is on his wanted list.

If Andy feels that ab individual should be taught a lesson, he can use the boxing glove icon at the bottom of the screen to engage in some gentlemanly fisticuffs. Punch-ups quickly reduce his alcohol level, however, and a pub must be found fast! If he engages in too many rounds of boxing he can find himself up before the judge with a hefty fine to pay. He must also be careful that in the scuffle, he doesn't lose his wallet.

Such things can only worsen Andy's sad plight, so to augment his scant financial resources, Andy can take a chance on picking the winner of the next horse race, and with a bit of luck scrounge some cash from the barman or get away with Flo's handbag without her knowing. If all else fails, he can always get a job!

NATHAN

" I found it great fun to control Andy's boisterous pursuits and I was soon going round clad in flat cap and braces, fighting with the local police and rent man, chasing after my girlfriend and then downing a few in the local pub. The graphics are just like those in the comic strip and really capture the whole feel of Andy's lifestyle There are some decent sound effects and also an Andy Capp anthem when you die.

The game itself is rather hard: I found tasks such as keeping my alcometer up and paying the rent quite difficult. I also found it too easy to stray away from my quest to fight everyone in sight and chase numerous girlfriends which proved much more fun! Andy Capp **stays in with the light-hearted newspaper cartoon and is sure to be a hit with fans of strip. "**

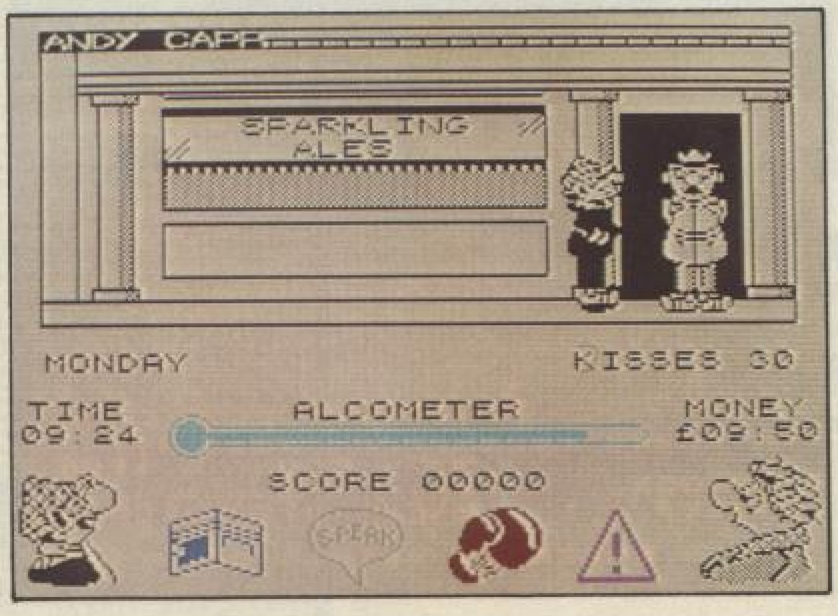
77%

BYM

" The graphics in Andy Capp **are clear and very well drawn with some great animation. If you're used to the** Tai-Pan**-style layout you won't get lost, but everyone else should indulge in a little cartography to ensure rapid progress. The adventure-type actions obviously help the game but are a little confusing at first; they do take a bit of exploration to discover their capabilities. A wider range of speech and actions would push the game to a higher playability rating, but this should entertain you for a while. "**

68%

► *Andy Capp*: **the** *Daily Mirror* **character accurately reflected**



MIKE

" Andy Capp is quite a jolly little game. There isn't much to do but for the first half hour or so it's quite entertaining. The graphics are very good; I especially liked the fight sequence! Mirrorsoft's version of the famous cartoon character is extremely accurate (I'm a keen Daily Mirror **fan) and it works well. That's not to say it's addictive, however, since the action is slow and becomes tiresome after a while. I couldn't really recommend** Andy Capp, **but I'm sure some people will enjoy it. What I want to know is when someone's going to do Alex from** The Independent. **"**

73%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: cartoon-type characters and backgrounds, accurate to Reg Smythe's original
Sound: simple title tune and very poor in-game effects
General rating: plenty of appeal for all Andy's readers

Presentation	65%
Graphics	70%
Playability	75%
Addictive qualities	73%
OVERALL	**73%**

DYNATRON MISSION

Producer: **Mastertronic**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Authors: **Paul Hargreaves**

When you joined the space forces, nobody said it would be like this. But here you are on an alien space base trying to retrieve eight Dynatron Cores. These places are fraught with danger, and you're only allowed three lives.

The alien bases consist of high-tech chambers and underground caverns through which you can run, jump and duck, and you can increase or reduce your power as necessary.

But it can be hard work looking for Dynatron Cores and your body knows it. An electrocardiogram (ECG) shows your heartbeat as it switches between vigorous activity and contemplation of your next move. If the beat rate gets too high you're in trouble.

To provide some help on your heart-thumping quest there are sliding platforms that pass over ravines, slides that move you so fast they get you there before you've gone, light stairs and bridges, and trampolines that can increase your jumping height. Retracting bridges can give you some assistance, but must be used with the greatest of care.

And you have to keep a close watch on the strange world around you, because airborne aliens have a horrifying touch that even a quick dab of TCP won't cure. So cuddle them at your peril.

These aren't all the horrors that await, either – laser beams can slice your carcass neater than a Dewhurst butcher, and hydraulic pistons flatten you very effectively.

When you collect one of the Cores, a defence system is automatically triggered and a timer begins a countdown. The alien complex must be left before this reaches zero or your body particles will be ripped asunder. So get cracking, and collecting the other seven.

BEN

" Hmmmm, this I've seen before. Dynatron Mission **looks and plays like so many other budget platform games, and frankly it offers nothing new. Strolling around the pretty graphics isn't particularly compelling and timing jumps carefully to dodge nasties lost i's appeal years ago. The problems involved are quite difficult, so** Dynatron Mission **may well appeal to hardened problem-solvers but there's not much here to attract anyone who's already got a few games of this genre. "**

50%



▶ *Dynatron Mission*: **the old ideas are the best ones**

NICK

" Dynatron Mission **is an excellent game, full of colour and detailed graphics. It's a bit similar to another Mastertronic game,** Universal Hero **– something fishy there! But even if you already own** Universal Hero **you'll find this a fantastic game and be addicted in a second. It's full of hidden extras, such as the spaceman's heartbeat, and the animated sequence at the start.** Dynatron Mission **is brill, so get mapping it! "**

88%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: intricately detailed with liberal use of colour
Sound: the odd spot effect
Options: definable keys
General rating: an enjoyable and involving game, but much like the others in its genre

Presentation	71%
Graphics	77%
Playability	66%
Addictive qualities	67%
OVERALL	**71%**

PRO GOLF II

Producer: **Atlantis**
Retail price: **£1.99**

It's off to the links once again, and your bag of clubs hangs heavy on the caddy's shoulder – but that doesn't worry you, because you're about to play some great golf.

Two courses are available to you, Lytham and Royal St George's. On each you can decide whether to play a single round, or a four-round pro championship against up to 17 players. The prevailing weather and ground conditions can be set, or given a random element. The wind speed and direction are vitally important, as both can seriously affect the flight of the ball.

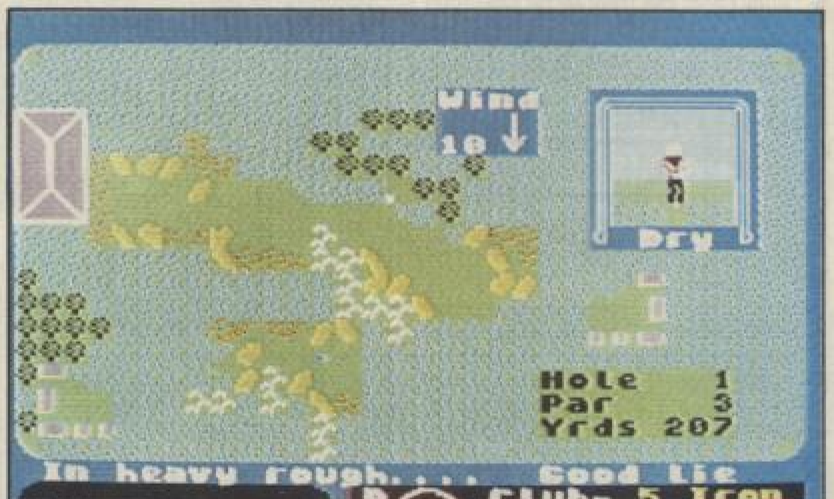
At each hole you can select one of 13 clubs. Club selection is made with regard to how the ball is lying, on what type of surface (fairway, bunker, rough), and how far it needs to be hit.

The strength of the swing is another variable. There is also the possibility for backspinning.

Once the ball has been hit on to the green, the putter is automatically selected as the appropriate club, but you still have to determine the direction and strength of the shot. This time the slope may be the problem.

As with all golf courses, there are hazards like sand bunkers, and on these courses in the game there are water traps and some areas which are out of bounds. If you get stuck in one of these, only certain clubs may be used to get you out and back in the contest.

▶ **Full of holes:** *Pro Golf II*



CRITICISM

● " There have been dozens of golf games released over the years especially budget ones. But *Pro Golf II* seems to have taken features from lots of versions and put them all together to produce a very well presented and playable game. The great thing about this golf game is its so easy to play and understand what's going on even with its sickeningly bright colours. "
NATHAN **61%**

● " Pro Golf II **is bad. Seriously bad. The graphics are chronic, the gameplay is worse. "**
MIKE **20%**

● " *There's no doubt about it, if you don't know everything there is to know about golf you won't understand, let alone like, Pro Golf II.* Rather too much has been crammed into the screen and I find the same problem as with golf on TV: the ball disappears because it is so small and the background so fuzzy. Atlantis set themselves a hard test trying to turn golf to the computer and they failed, miserably. "
BYM **23%**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: none
Graphics: bad use of colour with simply-defined targets and scenery
Sound: barely a beep to be heard
Options: championship or medal competition
General rating: for unchoosy golf fans – at least it's cheaper than the real gear

Presentation	54%
Graphics	30%
Playability	37%
Addictive qualities	34%
OVERALL	**30%**

STREET HASSLE

Producer: **Melbourne House**
Retail price: **£8.99**
Authors: **Beam Software**

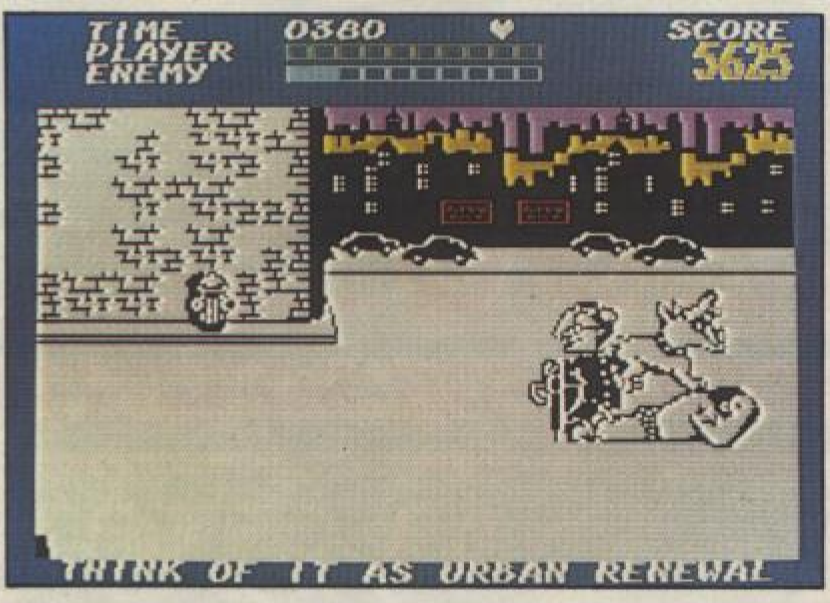
It's not easy being a superhero. You stand out in a crowd, attract attention to yourself and have to beat off admirers. Underwear Man is one such crusader – but unfortunately he takes things a bit too seriously and attacks anyone that comes near him.

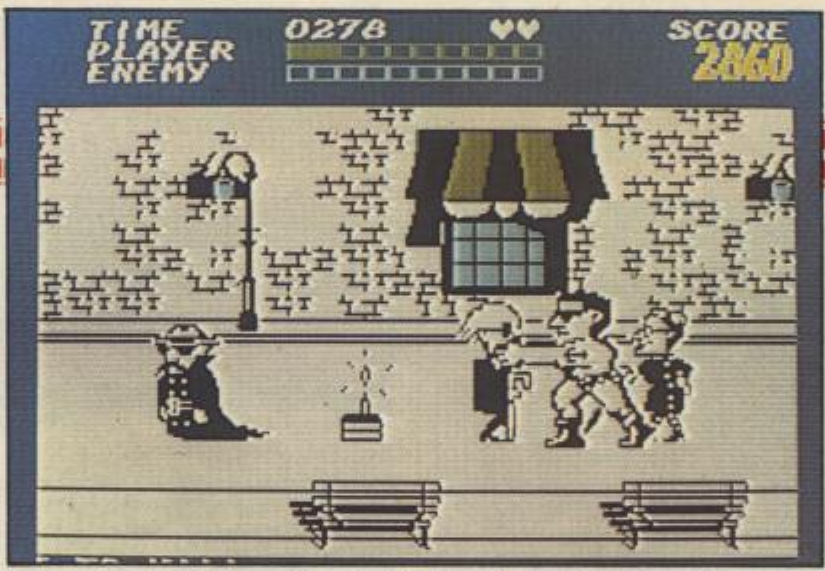
The player takes control of UM and battles hordes of weird and wonderful characters, individually at first, and then in groups on higher levels. UM isn't exactly defenceless, and has an array of simple kicks and punches, and some special moves, including the deadly ear tweak!

At the top of the screen are two energy bars. The first denotes UM's energy level and remains on screen throughout the game, while the second appears only when an opponent draws near. As the combat ensues, both bars diminish according to contact made between the two parties. Should UM's energy disappear completely, he loses one of this three lives.

Lost energy is replenished by catching the winged hearts that are periodically released by a midget in a trench coat. Care

► 'Lovely cartoon-style graphics and plenty of playability'





► Comic strip: Melbourne House's *Street Hassle* stars Underwear Man

PAUL

" Street Hassle boasts some lovely cartoon-style graphics and has plenty of playability to back them up. It also has a great sense of humour, making it far more fun than regular combat games. The characters are great, such as the old granny who attacks you with her umbrella and the vicious little dog which comes flying at you – but the best has just got to be the huge gorilla who throws bananas as well as powerful punches. If you enjoy beat 'em ups and have a good sense of humour – go for Street Hassle **"**

76%

NICK

" Another beat 'em up hits the street! Street Hassle **is a really bad influence to all those impressionable young people out there. Head butting little old grannies, kneeing blind men and exploding overweight people are all in this game (how corrupting!). The graphics are excellently drawn, and the animation is detailed and smooth. The only drawback is the multiload which forces you to wait around. Still,** Street Hassle **is worth a look – if you can stand the hassle of going down the street to buy it! "**

77%

SCRUPLES

Producer: **Virgin Games**
Retail price: **£9.95 cassette, £14.95 disk**
Authors: **Sentient Software, from a Milton Bradley board game**

Scruples is the latest in a long line of board games to be translated to the Spectrum, and requires the players to answer awkward and often embarrassing questions.

The game is played by three to ten human or computer-controlled players, with each player having a different character make-up. Human players choose their own personalities, and if the computer plays, it decides for itself what sort of a person it is. Each player chooses a face from the ten provided, which is displayed next to the board, and the action begins.

Each player has from three to five question cards, and answer cards with 'yes', 'no' and 'depends' on them. The bottom of the screen provides prompts for asking questions and challenging answers.

NICK

" I haven't played the board game, but if it's anything like the computer game, it must be pretty good. The graphics are excellent with very neat playing cards and people with different expressions on their faces. There are cheerful jingles and tunes played throughout the game, adding that extra 'je ne sais quoi'. Answering the rather embarrassing questions is a lot of fun too – although I did find it a little dull when playing with computer opponents – they're just too inhuman! Scruples **is an excellent conversion of the board game, which should definitely be played in a group! "**

73%

BYM

" Certainly a game to sit down to with a gang of friends for a long winter evening of self-generated entertainment. However, I much prefer the board game – it brings out the true character in people by the way they answer, as opposed to setting the characteristics with the computer. Lively debates don't occur between computer opponents – it's far more fun playing with a couple or group of humans. Try it for family playing. "

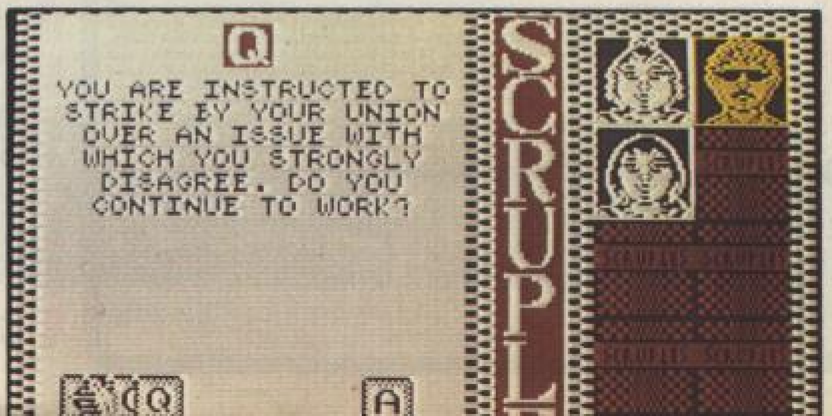
75%

PAUL

" Putting the electronic element into Scruples **has really killed the board game. It's not as much fun knowing what the computer thinks, compared to seeing other people cringe at their own answers. The implementation is sound, but the game doesn't project itself enough for any 'real' fun. I doubt very much whether players of the** Scruples **board game will find much fun in the computer version – I know I didn't. "**

65%

► Awkward questions: Virgin Games's *Scruples*



MIKE

" Street Hassle **is a really wicked game! The graphics are highly amusing, and the gameplay has more depth than most of the beat 'em ups I've played. The main element is humour, with plenty of laughs as the hero battles a series of whacky characters with his arsenal of even whackier moves! A brilliant laugh, slightly lacking staying power, but fun nonetheless.** "

73%

should be taken, however, since on higher levels this character also rolls out bombs, and unless UM swiftly tosses it off screen he loses another life. It's certainly all go in Melbourne these days . . .

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Sinclair, Kempston, Cursor
Graphics: large and cleverly animated graphics with effective backgrounds
Sound: more bash and blow effects
General rating: a beat em up with plenty of variation and a Pythonesque sense of humour

Presentation	79%
Graphics	80%
Playability	81%
Addictive qualities	78%
OVERALL	**75%**

If a player thinks that another player's answer to a question is incorrect, he may challenge, and the other players vote on whether the challenge is to be accepted or not. The penalty for losing a challenge is an extra question card. Since the objective is to get rid of all the question cards, this isn't desirable – so be honest . . . even if you have to embarrass yourself!

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: plain, but effective
Sound: reasonable tunes and jingles are played throughout
Options: three to ten human or computer-controlled players
General rating: a good interpretation of the board game which works best when played in a group

Presentation	74%
Graphics	68%
Playability	75%
Addictive qualities	71%
OVERALL	**71%**

CALIFORNIA GAMES

Producer: **US Gold**
Retail price: **£8.99**
Authors: **Epyx**

This latest Epyx sports simulation gives players the chance to compete in six radical new games under the sweltering Californian sun.

In half-pipe skateboarding, the player performs as many stunts as possible. Points are awarded for the difficulty of stunts attempted, and the highest score wins. Three falls signals the start of the next event – the foot bag, or hackysack.

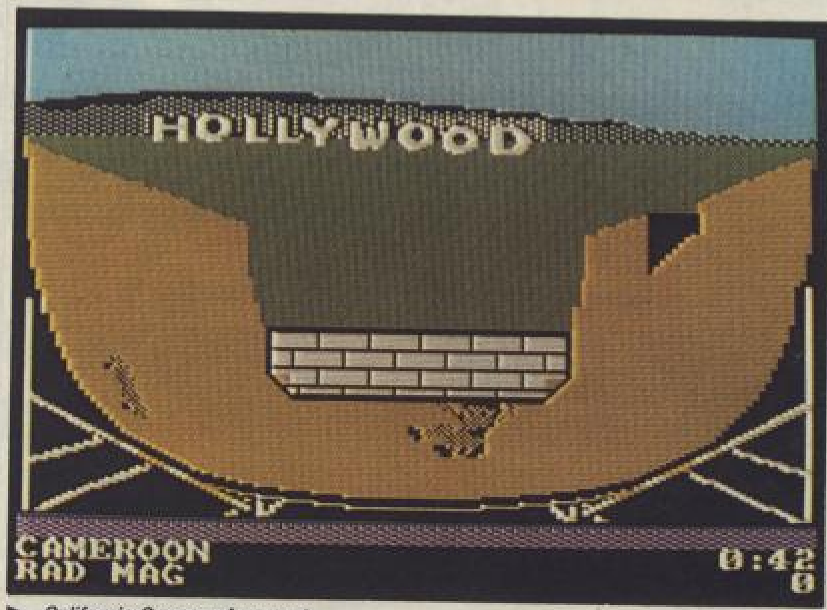
Here, the player keeps a small bean bag in the air by kicking it or bouncing it off head and shoulders. Each successful manoeuvre earns points, and a varied succession of kicks is even more fruitful. Again, the highest total wins.

Surfing appears next, and the surfer moves backwards and forwards along the face of the wave, keeping close to its 'curl' to gain maximum points. Points are also awarded for the speed and length of ride, and for the number of difficult manoeuvres accomplished. Four wipeouts signals a premature end to the contest.

Next, it's back on land for the rollerskating event, which takes place along a seafront sidewalk. The course is completed within the time limit, and points are earned for spins and jumps.

Three falls means disqualification and the start of the penultimate event, which sees the player perched on a BMX racing bike about to set off across a hazardous desert course. The winner finishes the course in the fastest time, with extra points being earned by performing stunts along the way. Two minor falls are allowed during the course, but one 'serious' mishap ends the event.

The final sport features the Flying Disk (or Frisbee), with three attempts in which to throw the circular disk to a waiting catcher. The throw is made by setting the speed and angle of trajectory and control moves to the catcher who is directed to grab the disk as it flies past. Points are awarded for the length of throw and the degree of athleticism accompanying the catch.



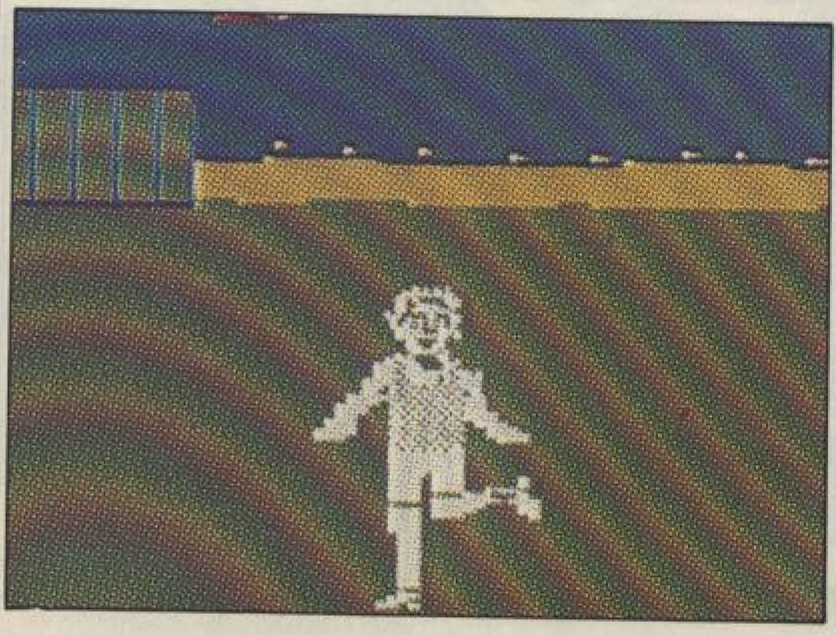
▶ *California Games* **wipes out**

CRITICISM

● " **California Games** is a real disappointment. Whether or not it's because the Spectrum simply isn't up to a game of this complexity, or because the programmers have skimped on this version I'm not sure – but it certainly isn't up to the standard I'd expect. The graphics are poor on most, if not all the events, and playability is sadly lacking throughout. The final nail in the coffin is the high price tag. **California Games** is a major mistake – don't buy it. "
MIKE **39%**

● " **I thought the whole point of multiloads was that by sectioning the game up, more memory could be used on each event. Perhaps I'm wrong. It certainly doesn't seem to be the case with** California Games. **You have to wait for each event to load in – and when you get there it just doesn't seem to have been worth it. The graphics and gameplay seem to bear no connection with the supposedly high Epyx pedigree. Definitely not recommended.** "
BYM **41%**

● " California Games *is a total waste of time and money. The graphics are dismal, the colour is pathetic and the sound – what sound?. You have to load and re-load all the events, and once completed you have to start all over again! The screen is so cluttered with stray attribute problems that it often looks as though the game has crashed! I'd steer well clear of this.* "
NICK **30%**



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: lacking in colour and detail
Sound: disappointingly sparse
Options: to play/practice one or all the events
General rating: the poorest Epyx release yet; lacking playability and addictiveness

Presentation	55%
Graphics	42%
Playability	43%
Addictive qualities	43%
OVERALL	**36%**

COMBAT ZONE

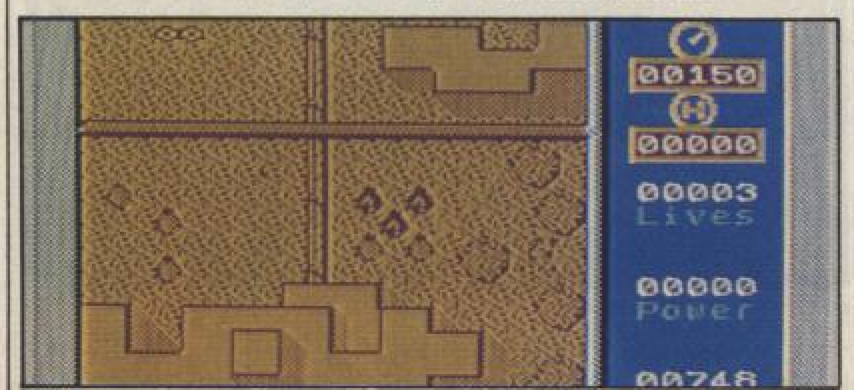
Producer: **Alternative Software**
Retail price: **£1.99**

Colonel Mentor, ace of air aces, has been ordered out of retirement to combat an enemy threat. Stretching out his arthritic limbs the old, bold Colonel goes to work, flying over alien territory.

As he moves onward, with the landscape scrolling vertically beneath him, the fighter pilot encounters hordes of enemy craft intent upon shooting him down. The Colonel's fighter is equipped with a basic blaster, aimed with a cursor, which can take out these irritating machines. For greater destructive power, Mentor can engage bombs which can destroy pulsing enemy ground installations.

This arsenal can further be increased if an enemy supply ship is captured by running into it. When Mentor does this, a hyper bomb becomes available. When the hyper bomb is detonated it destroys all enemy fighters in its vicinity.

But the fighter's fuel and the Colonel's lives are limited – this old soldier doesn't just fade away.



► **Arthritic:** *Combat Zone*

CRITICISM

● " Yet more vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-ups . . . this one has cramped graphics, small, jerky, colourless and hard to distinguish from the ground. Good points are: no vile colours, and a useful aiming device. "
BYM **64%**

● " *Combat Zone* **is enough to put anyone off shoot-'em-ups for life. The scrolling is very slow and there's no evidence of sound. The sight used to aim is no help whatsoever, and neither is the optional cheat mode – because the intolerable game is easy enough anyway! "**
NATHAN **21%**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: none
Graphics: cramped and confused
Sound: uninteresting
Options: cheat mode
General rating: a poor monochrome shoot-'em-up

Presentation	52%
Graphics	42%
Playability	42%
Addictive qualities	25%
OVERALL	**43%**

SUPER STUNTMAN

Producer: **Code Masters**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Author: **P Williamson**

As an amazingly competent stunt man, you have to steer a car over a vertically scrolling course covered in rocky outcrops and cacti, and jump river ravines by using ramps as you progress across the landscape.

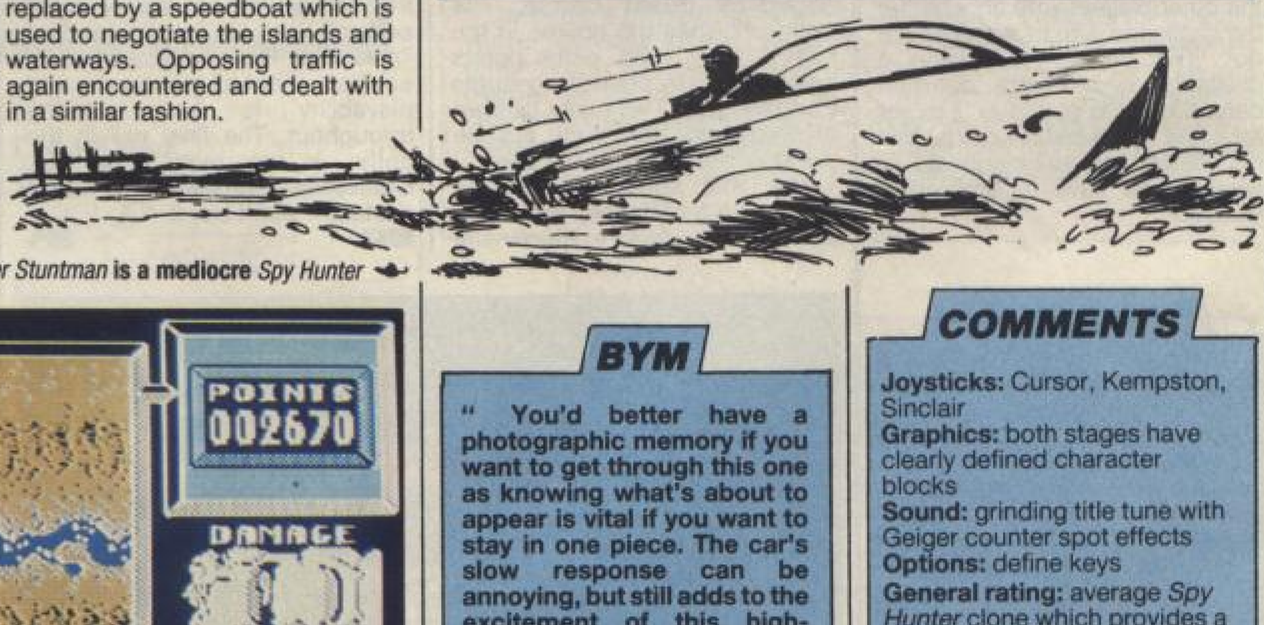
The route is also hampered by the appearance of other vehicles which attempt to run the car off the road – these are swiftly removed by using the vehicle's forward-firing blasters.

Collision with ground features and vehicles incurs dents which are indicated on the damage monitor at the top of the screen. Too much damage effectively writes off the car, and there are only three with which to complete the stunt.

On reaching the river, the car is replaced by a speedboat which is used to negotiate the islands and waterways. Opposing traffic is again encountered and dealt with in a similar fashion.

PAUL

" *Spy Hunter* **returns – well, almost. The cars, sound, playability and backdrops are all below standard, but what shocks me most about** *Super Stuntman* **is how basic and old-fashioned the game is. Nothing in it is particularly well done – the graphics are very simply animated, the effects sound more like something out of a Geiger counter than a computer game and the collision detection just has to be seen (or not seen should I say) to be believed. Something else that caught my attention was the fact that you retain the car's damage indicator when steering the boat! Where's all that Code Masters flair gone? "**
39%



► **Back to basics: Code Masters's** ***Super Stuntman*** **is a mediocre** ***Spy Hunter***



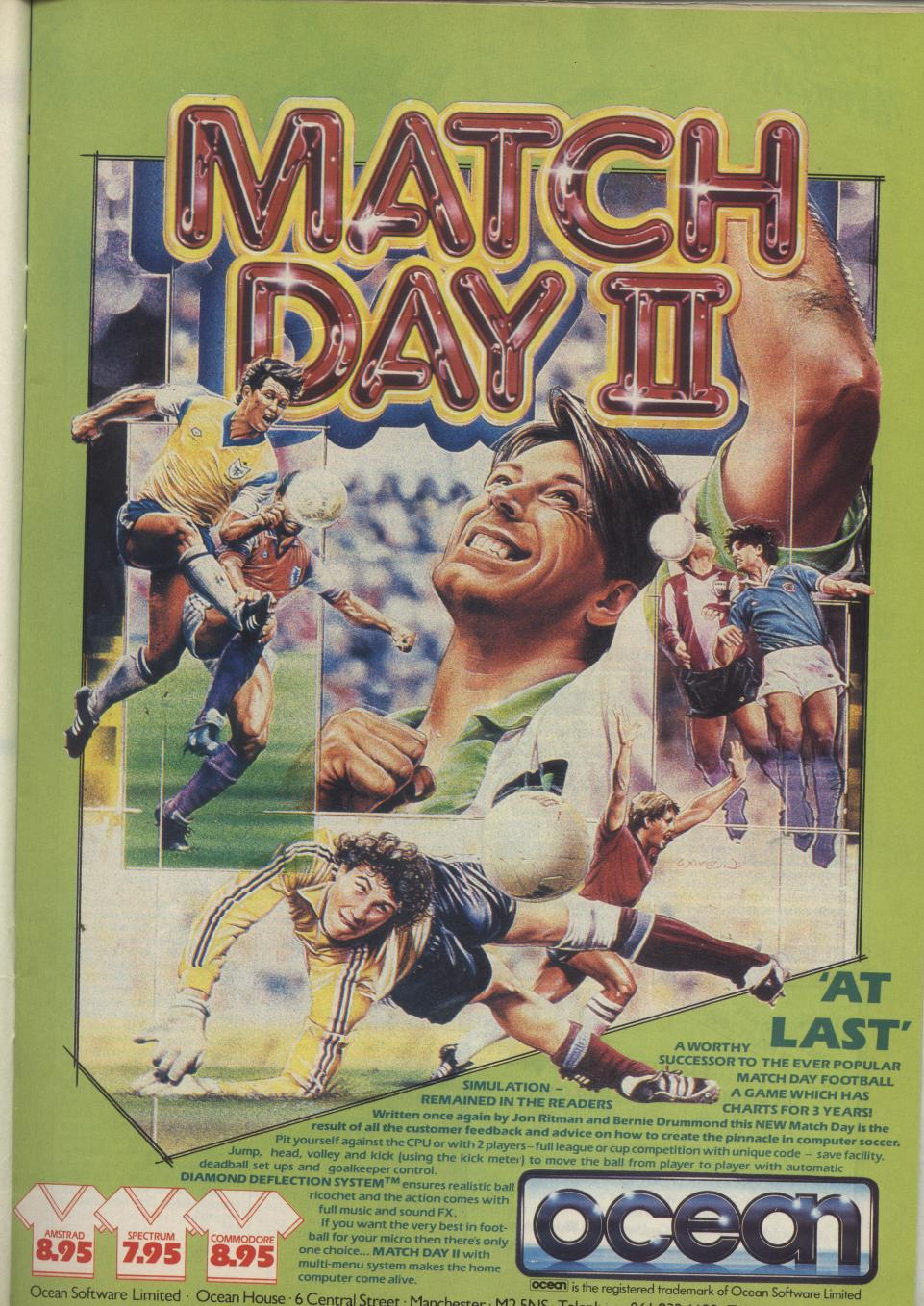
BYM

" **You'd better have a photographic memory if you want to get through this one as knowing what's about to appear is vital if you want to stay in one piece. The car's slow response can be annoying, but still adds to the excitement of this high-speed driving game. The graphics are pretty decent, with some tasteful colours, and while the damage monitor is a good idea, it remains fairly superfluous. Give it a try if you're into violent racing. "**
66%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: both stages have clearly defined character blocks
Sound: grinding title tune with Geiger counter spot effects
Options: define keys
General rating: average *Spy Hunter* clone which provides a thrill or two

Presentation	73%
Graphics	57%
Playability	48%
Addictive qualities	61%
OVERALL	**53%**



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LLOYD MANGRAM'S FORUM



The anniversaries are coming thick and fast this year – Christmas, the Australian bicentenary, 150 years since my grandmother first said 'do as you would be done by', and so on. The last burst of CRASH's historical extravaganza – the conclusion of the CRASH Directory – is this month too, so it seems £30 of software should go to the first letter for its moving tribute to the half-century of CRASH . . . which seems like 50 years sometimes.

STRAIGHT FROM THE CHART

Dear Lloyd,
I'm sure you're aware that next February CRASH reaches a quite brilliant half-century of issues. I'm sure you're planning a rather special issue for the time and may I be among the first to congratulate you, as a loyal reader, with every precious issue stored away in a tidy heap in my bedroom.

Times have changed since the early days of *3D Deathchase*, *Ant Attack* and *Bugaboo* but for me those will always be the best days. The CRASH History is a lovely piece of nostalgia for us fans of the old classics like *Football Manager*, *Manic Miner* and *The Hobbit*.

I remember you saying once that CRASH is 'not just a magazine, more a way of life'. So true. After a TV interview, one of your team said 'yesterday we were just nobodies, now we're only bigger nobodies'. Well, for one Spectrum-owner the names of Lloyd Mangram and Robin Candy will rank alongside Freddie Mercury and Ian Rush among my childhood memories. The down to earth chit-chat style, some call it self indulgence, arouses a special magic in me.

What does it matter that the solution to *Everyone's A Wally* is given away, that arcade adventures appear in an adventure chart, that games are not given a percentage rating for sound or that *Match Day* is not Smashed? To some young people it matters one hell of a lot. The Spectrum is more than a toy – it, like CRASH becomes a way of life. It's escapism, it gives a fed up mind a reason to live – like a drug if you like. You've got no girlfriend, no money and mum and dad are always on your back but you can kick hell out of a few Ninjas and sabre-toothed orcs. It whiles away those cold, dreary lonely nights by sending you off to the forest of Dreams in the Land of Midnight, *Atic Atac*'s Castle or whatever tickles your fancy.

In-depth reviews, a superb Hotline Chart, comprehensive playing tips, great competitions, catering for minority tastes like educational programs and PBM. I've read the Terminal Man over and over again, loved exploring the game maps (the original Jet Set Willy map set new standards in playing tips and I won't ever forget the perfect Knight Lore drawing) and will never forget the thrill when I first got a letter published in the magazine. Incredibly trendy sarcasm or pretend fantasy writers just do not work, so I'm so glad CRASH has stuck to good old homely Brewster, Stone, Kean and Mangram – to a reader like me you lot begin to get a bit like soap opera people rather than real person up in the place called Ludlow only famous for its Safari Park really.

Well, now that I've flattered the lot of you and thanked you ever so kindly, I'd like to present these amazing statistics based on the CRASH Hotlines for issues 1-46 . . .

Most issues at Number One (games)

1 *Gauntlet* US Gold .... 8 (and still there)
2 *Sabre Wulf* Ultimate ... 6
3 *Commando* Elite 5

Most issues at Number One (producers)

1= Ultimate and Elite .... 10 (3 games each)
3 US Gold ...... 9 (2 games)
4 Software Projects .... 6 (2 games)

Most games in the Top Three (producers)

1= Ultimate and Ocean . 6
3 Elite 4
4 Beyond 3

Most issues at Number One in Adventure Chart (games)

1 *Heavy On The Magick* (Gargoyle Games) 10
2 *The Hobbit* (Melbourne House) ... 5 (and still there)
3= *Doomdark's Revenge* (Beyond) and *Lord Of The Rings* (Melbourne House) 4

Most issues at Number One in Adventure Chart (producers)

1 Gargoyle Games .... 12 (3 games)
2 Melbourne Hous .... 11 (3 games)
3 Beyond ..... 8 (3 games)
4 Level 9 ...... 5 (4 games)

Personally, I find this makes quite interesting reading. If anybody wants to know who's had most Number Ones on either chart I'll say that every producer with more than one Number One does appear in each 'Most Issues at No 1 by producer' chart, so if you understand what I'm saying you can work it out for yourself.

Yours CRASH-readingly,
Mike Roberts, Okehampton, Devon

PS Do you realise it's 3 years since Ultimate released *Knight Lore/ Underwurlde*. THREE YEARS! How time flies, I don't know!

Roger Kean, who moves from subject to subject and is about to move to the Philippines for four weeks, promises me he's got some inside info on what Ultimate's been doing SINCE Knight Lore *and* Underwurlde *– coming soon. In the meantime, can see Robin and I are going to argue over who gets to be Freddie Mercury and who's Ian Rush – but thanks for your comparisons Mike. The Spectrum does become a way of life, as you say, though whether that's an entirely healthy thing I don't know. (There must be more to life than this . . .) And your last paragraph belongs on a puzzle page, so try this one: if 49 issues of CRASH each measured 210cm by 300cm and there were 88 lines of 8-point text on each line written by a staff of five in three weeks flat on a desk that's not big enough, should* Match Day *have been a Smash?*
LM



UPGRADING UPBRAIDING

Dear Lloyd,
Having read Jonathan Khan's letter (Issue 48) it looks like you did no research for your reply. Advice was to buy a +2 as more bits were needed if bought an Atari. What bits? Compare.

+2 £139, built in Datacorder
+3 £199, built in disk drive
Atari 520 STFM £299 built in disk drive and lead for TV

The advert also stated that 6 free games came with the +2 and +3. WH Smith is giving away 6 free games with the 520 ST. What more bits do you need?? Also, the +2, +3 and 48K machines that page in/out different memory pages. The 520 ST is 512K all accessible.

Simon N Goodwin (p143 Issue 48) says that the ST is a disposable machine? At £299 disposable?? Also that games are just prettier versions of 8 bit games. I agree that at the moment a lot of the games are upgrades of 8 bit ones but they are much better than the Spectrum ones. In *GFL Championship Football* on Spectrum the linemen can't be seen individually. It is just a whole mess due to colour clashes!! The Atari version is much more clear with one team in red and one in blue. No colour clashes.

Once the sales of the ST rise, better games will be released using the 16 bit chip to its full. Remember when the 16K Spectrum appeared the first games were upgrades of ZX81 games.

The Spectrum is now an ancient computer and the quality of the games will not improve. 16 bit computers are now 'the' computers. The Amiga and ST are similar to the C64 and the Spectrum. One has better sound and graphics but the other is substancially cheaper. More people will buy the ST for the same reasons more people bought the Spectrum. As sales increase so will quality of software until the 68000 processor is pushed to its limits as the Z80 has been pushed.

Don't be short-sighted Lloyd, get into a magazine that deals with 16-bit computers.

Henry Shades, Glasgow

I hate to pull a truism on you Henry, but the opposite of short-sighted is long-sighted. The hyperopic (LMLWD) can see forever, but not the end of their nose – and there's no sense abandoning the Spectrum now when the standards of 16-bit games (in graphics, particularly) are filtering down to the 8-bit programmers. The ST's a fine machine (I'm an Impact fan as you probably guessed last month) but the quality of Spectrum games is improving – look at the number of high Smashes we've had lately – and the argument that it's 'ancient' is a nonstarter. The 'latest' technology is always hyped and it's very easy to be a victim of fashion.
LM

PRAISE FOR THE MULTIFACE 3

Dear Lloyd,
A few months ago I bought a +3. When I opened the box I found there was no cassette lead so I looked in the manual and it told me that I could get a suitable cassette lead quite easily. I went to our local Dixons and asked for one. They didn't know anything about it so I finally ended up visiting every electrical shop in Aberystwyth until finally one shop told me that no such lead existed and it would cost a fiver for them to make one. I shelled out a fiver and when I tried to plug it in, the plug wouldn't fit, I had to cut most of the rubber protective casing off the jack before it would fit.

My problems didn't end there – I had written programs of my own on my old 128K Speccy and I had to plug my +3 up to my MIDI system with tone and volume at full blast to load them.

Then a couple of months ago I started subscription to CRASH and saw a preview of the Multiface 3. You made it look so good I bought one and have found that a +3 and a Multiface 3 are a brilliant team. I would not recommend buying a +3 without buying a Multiface 3 too.

I have also found that if you erase and resave things on disk the disk gets corrupted after a lot of use and regular formatting is needed.

Neil 'The Computerised Rocker' Humphreys, Aberystwyth

You may be the computerised rocker but there's only one Freddie Mercury.
LM

ON THE SCREAM

Dear Lloyd,
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAARRRRGGG HHH!!!!!!!!!! Now you may (or may not) be wondering why such a strange expression of feeling starts this letter. Well, the wierd combination of letters and punctuation brings across my feeling towards one of your staff. I am fed up with Mike Dunn writing every issue that every screen printed gets a full colour framed and mounted screen dump courtesy of Rainbird.

This month (Issue 48) he wrote how his extra room would be just the 'usual barefaced editorial lie'. Who is he to talk about lying? I don't know about other On The Screen artists, but I have had two screens printed, one in Issue 45 (October), and one as far back as Issue 43 (August), but have had no sign of any screen dump. In Issue 46, we were told 'don't despair. Rainbird's Clare Edgeley is on the case.'

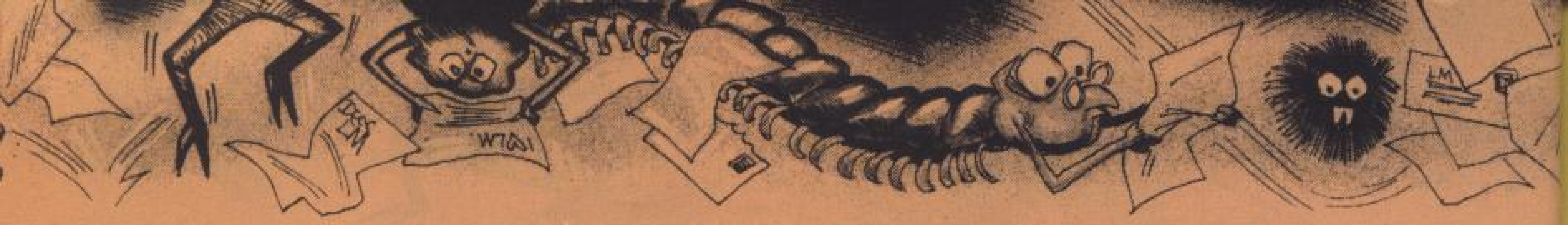
I have already written twice to Mike D. and once to the Forum, but have had no reply. Please can you just tell me, and many other people trying to get the promised dump, why they are not forthcoming, and when they will be?

I also have a couple of complaints to make: Why is it that you are always complaining about lack of space, and then you waste it all by putting a Christmas logo right in the middle of your Forum?

I'd just like to say well done for the massive amount of pull-outs in the Christmas Special, the CRASH history, the 3-D bits, the concise reviews, the exclusive previews, the excellent tips, the good covers, the arcade reviews, the CRASH sampler, the colour screenshots, the numerous competitions and the great features; need I say more? CRASH is still the best.

Mark Otway, Shepperton, Middlesex

We are very aware of the On The Screen problems and are genuinely trying to sort them out – to be honest perhaps there's more admininstration involved than we'd planned for, which is why things have been moving slowly. Just keep on hassling Mike D and you'll get through his headphones eventually. Lack of space is a funny thing – there's never enough space for all the different articles you want to print but then there's always those few inches too much for the ones you end up with!
LM



AN AMERICAN IN CRASH

Dear Lloyd,
As an American staying with my pen-pal on a brief visit to your country I'm not fully justified to take part in your Forum. I have only seen the last two issues of CRASH and am not, to be honest very knowledgeable on the state of Spectrum software. However, I thought you might appreciate a different perspective.

In general, I was pleasantly surprised by the British software industry. Sure, most of my friends have 16-bit micros, and our software is accordingly more sophisticated, with disk adventures comprising an entire world and arcade-standard graphics, but I now believe that in comparison to the British industry, in particular that of the smaller and older micros like the Spectrum, the human factor is somewhat lacking. The 'homeliness' of the Spectrum seems to have created a friendly, human atmosphere with friendly rivalry and programmers who seem like real people. CRASH reflects this atmosphere, with its jokey insults towards other magazines like *C&VG* and *Sinclair User* (which, as far as I can judge from seeing a few issues, come across as tacky, amateur imitations of the Newsfield magazines), I think you have achieved a very good balance between professional and informality. CRASH with its many illustrations, colourful appearance and good layout looks neither too strictly ordered nor sloppy and unprofessional. However (it had to come) the human element I praised above has resulted in what I feel are human errors. I hope you will take these points in the spirit of constructive criticism in which they are offered.

Firstly, the feature called Run It Again last month presented eight games with little in common apart from the fact that they all featured something with two or more wheels. Now, I have been well informed on this and I cannot see any connection between *Turbo Esprit*, *Paperboy*, *Enduro Racer* and *Glider Rider*. One is a 'cockpit' view game about drug dealers, one is a humorous arcade game, one is an isometric game (about a hanglider, for God's sake), and the last is a straightforward motorbike racer. Neither the graphics, the gameplay or the scenarios have anything in common, and to call them all 'race games' seemed to be stretching the genre a little. Why not group together games with the same style gameplay, for instance games based around the *Nemesis* theme, or *Breakout* games?

My second complaint is about the 'fanzine' in your Christmas issue. This seems a complete waste of time and space to me, and performed no task except for providing six people with a space in CRASH, and even their names had a somewhat fictional ring (Bertie Brie? Andres Whitham-Smythe?) Moreover, the content was bland and uninteresting, reviewing games already adequately covered in CRASH. The black and white screen dumps were unattractive after the colour pictures of the main magazine, and I'm afraid I can't see how this could help any budding fanzine editor; how many of them have the equipment to dump screns from games and insert them into text as you did? You call the computers you used 'cheap' but the Amstrad PCW8256 costs £400 the last time I looked. All in all Crunch came across as a joke, and a pretty poor one considering that many people are struggling to sell their own, probably far more intelligent and witty, fanzines without the help of expensive equipment. One final point: if this is a one-off, why the announcement that 'you CAN have YOUR say in the mag'?

Finally, your Forum itself. In my opinion, a few short, lightweight letters are essential to keep the letters pages enjoyable to read, but in the issues I have seen a good part of the letters were of lists of Top Ten 48K music. I expect you have all heard enough criticism of the Spectrum, and I think it's a great little machine, but it has to be said that music is not its strong point (even on the 128). To me, compiling these charts seems as worthwhile an occupation as listing the Top Ten Vic games. I hope I haven't offended too much and that you don't mind a few comments from a lousy Yank. CRASH is a fine magazine despite, or perhaps because of, the occasional hiccup.
Richard Shay, USA

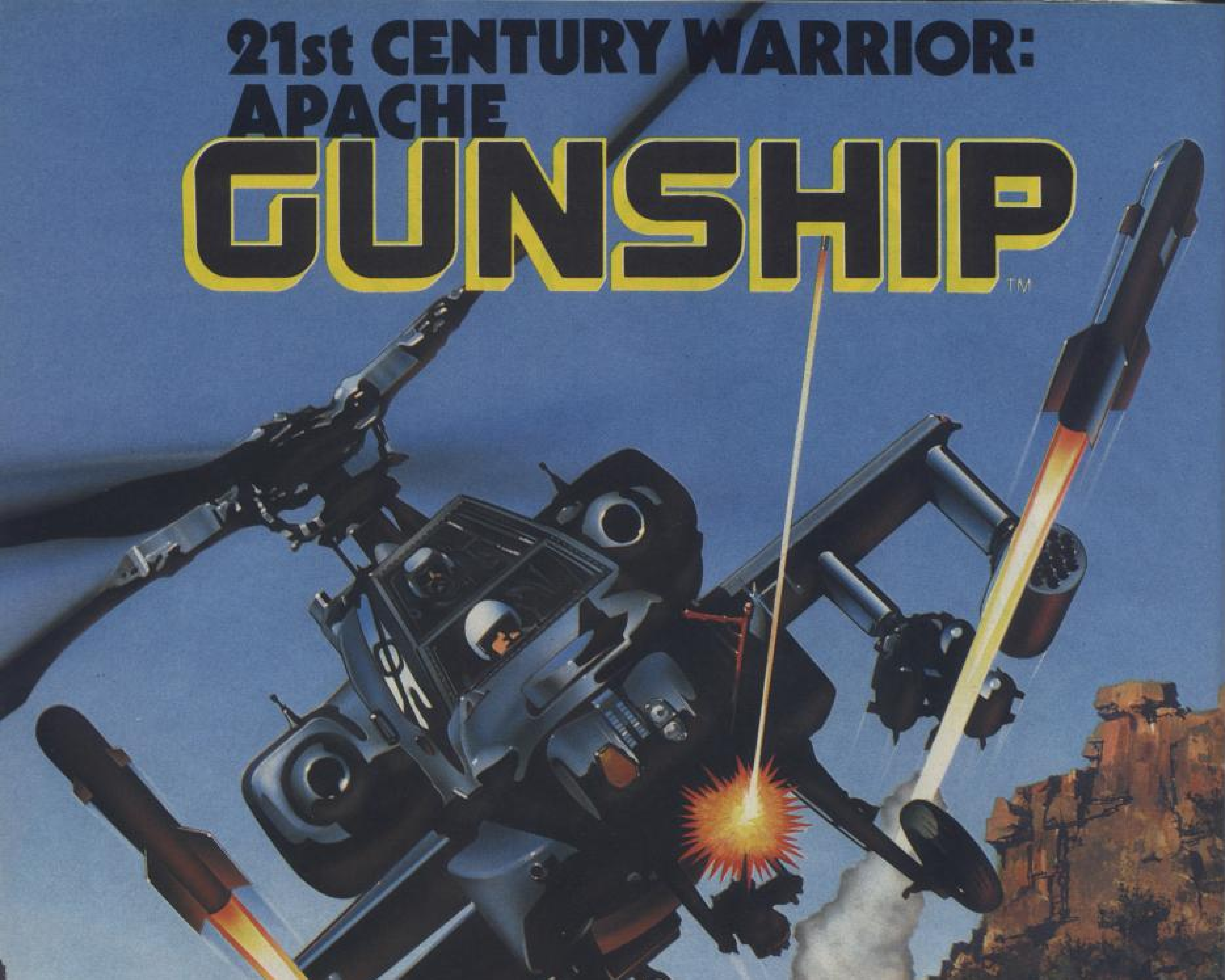
The connections between those Run It Again games may be tenuous, but then if you want to argue the point you could say the whole ethos of Run It Again is meaningless – it's not as if each person just buys one Breakout *or* Nemesis *game and must get the best, so a strict consumer-guide approach is pointless. Run It Again is just supposed to be a read, a way of discussing how different games approach a similar subject – not necessarily in the same way. Perhaps the salient point of the article you mention was, indeed, how many different approaches to vehicles there are on the Spectrum! On the other hand, I think your criticisms of CRUNCH are largely justified – and the editorial team learned something about fanzines themselves, which is that they take much, much longer to do than you expect!*
LM

Music charts, 16-bit vs 8-bit, the state of CRASH, the wickedness of the world . . . letters keep on coming and when there's space to fit them in there's never time to get them all answered with thought-provoking comments and an elegant balance of wit and expression, typeset, printed and on the shelves in time to provoke the next mailbag. Still, keep trying . . . I'm still Freddie Mercury, Lloyd Mangram that is, and I'm still at:

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Nick Roberts's

PLAYING TIPS



I've kept my New Year resolution so far – this year I'm checking *all* the POKEs before we print them! If you can send in your POKEs on tape ready to run I can check them much more easily and there's less chance of typing mistakes slipping in.

Before I start the tips this month I would just like to say that the photo of me shaking hands used in last month's CRASH Challenge was false. It must have been made using Markie's Photofit kit. Fume.

There are three outstanding maps this month – for Ocean's Athena, Elite's Thundercats and everyone's fave, Wizball from Ocean. But so many maps have arrived that in the May CRASH (Issue 52, on sale April 28) there'll be a map spectacular with 16 pages of your creative cartography!

GETTING HIGH IN *NEBULUS*

Hewson's Nebulus **was a big hit with everyone and now** Karl Savage **of Barnsley has come up with these tips for the first two towers. £30 of software is climbing up to Karl . . .**

LEVEL ONE – TOWER OF EYES

Walk right and enter the door. Once on the other side, dodge the eyeball nastie and go left. Stand on the lift and go up, but don't go through the door yet. Wait till a spinning nastie resembling a star comes on the screen from the right. Let it get close to you (careful timing is required), and just when it's about to hit you go through the door.

Now go left onto another lift and go up. Once you're up, don't worry about the ball-shaped nastie, just go right and get on the lift. Once up here, you'll encounter some flashing blocks. Shoot these away, then shoot the bouncy ball.

Go forward to the foot of the steps and watch the floating eyeball. The second it goes up, bound up the steps and you should just miss the spinning nastie entering from the left. Go through the door at the top of the steps and you'll find yourself on another platform with a bouncy ball. Shoot it, get on the lift and go up.

Now move left and wait at the edge of the platform till the familiar spinning nastie enters the screen. When it does, drop down off the ledge. Shoot the bouncy ball, dodge the eyeball and go left. Here, a series of platforms will collapse, leaving you on a lift.

Go up (it's a long way!) and when you get to the top you'll see some platforms going right to a door. The first of these platforms will collapse if you walk on it, so leap over it and enter the door (you should have just missed the spinning nastie coming from the left). On the other side, go left to the lift and wait till the hovering eyeball moves to the right. Quickly hop on the lift and go up.

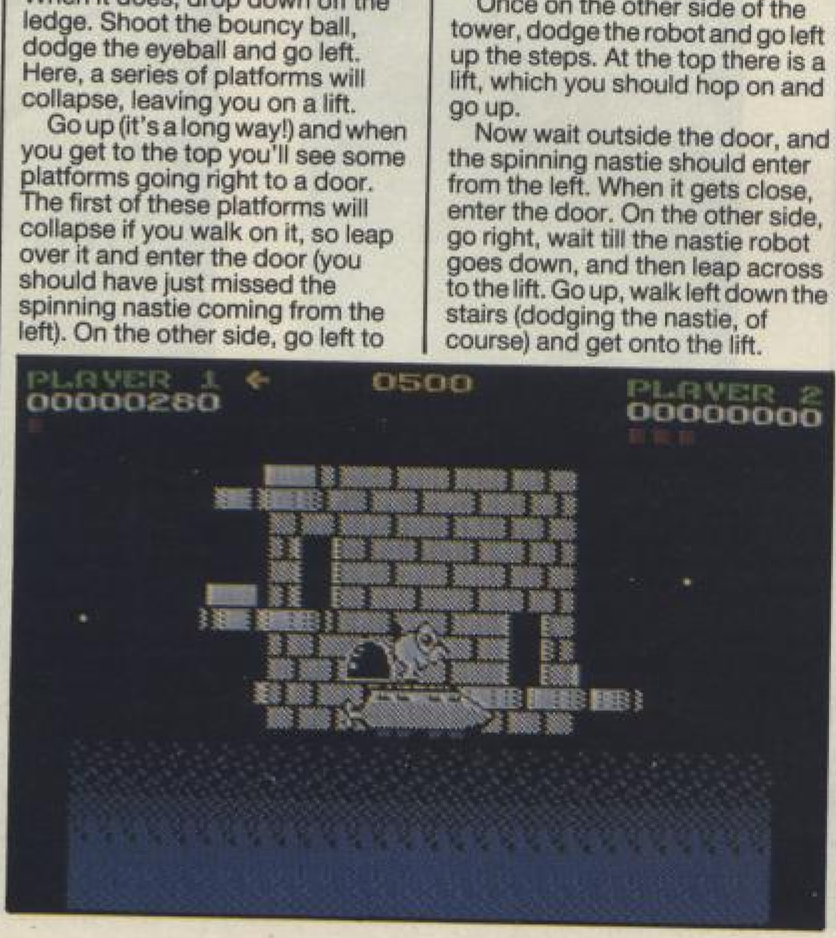
Go left to the door, but don't use it yet. The spinning nastie will enter the screen, and when it gets close enter the door. Once on the other side, move right, enter the door, and you've completed the first tower!

LEVEL TWO – REALM OF ROBOTS

Go left from the start and leap over the gaps. Climb onto the lift and go up. When the robot nastie goes down, leap over it and onto another lift. Go up, enter the door, and you should have missed the spinning nastie, coming from the right.

Once on the other side of the tower, dodge the robot and go left up the steps. At the top there is a lift, which you should hop on and go up.

Now wait outside the door, and the spinning nastie should enter from the left. When it gets close, enter the door. On the other side, go right, wait till the nastie robot goes down, and then leap across to the lift. Go up, walk left down the stairs (dodging the nastie, of course) and get onto the lift.



The spinning nastie will have entered from the left as you were going down the steps. Let it pass overhead and then go up on the lift. Go left and through the door. On the other side you will drop down onto a ledge with a lift on the left end.

Let the spinning nastie (coming from the right) pass over, and wait till the hovering baddie is out of the way. Then climb on the lift and go up. There is a door at the top, but don't use it. Instead, go left and up the stairs, being careful not to bump into any patrolling robots (this is a really tricky bit). The spinning nastie will enter as you are climbing the stairs – but in doing so, you should miss it.

Once you are safely at the top you will see a platform poised above a lift. Wait till the nastie beneath moves out of the way, then stop on the platform. It should collapse, and you will be left on the lift. Go up, enter the door at the top, and you will have conquered the second tower.

A POKEing TAPE TO BEAT ALL POKEing TAPES!

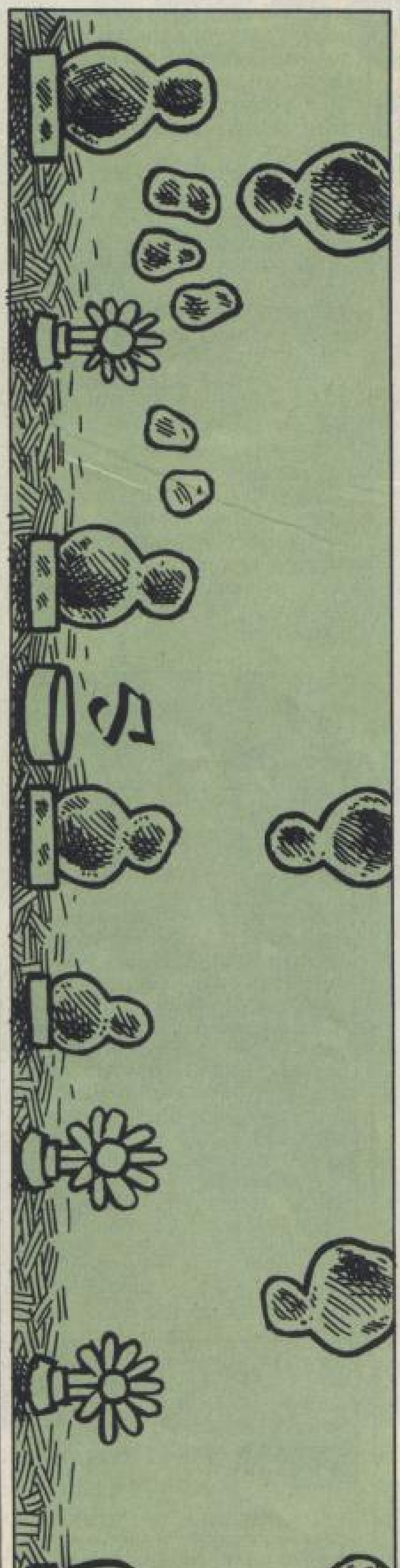
There's a new POKEing tape out called HACK PACK, **written by** The Nightshift. **It's a collection of over 100 self-running cheat routines for games old and new. Each routine displays onscreen prompts, so you can't go wrong! (At least, I didn't when I tested it – but then I'm extraordinarily bright.) You can obtain this cassette by sending a cheque or postal order for £2.50 made out to Softlink (N.I.) to: Softlink (N.I.), *19 Dunloy Gardens, Newtownabbey, Co Antrim, Northern Ireland BT37 9HZ.* And don't forget – CRASH brings you all the POKEs fit to POKE!**

SHORT CIRCUIT TREAT

John Morris **has found an exciting extra game on Ocean's** Short Circuit **called** Fruit Machine. **John says it's better than** Short Circuit **itself. All you have to do is load the game as usual and then follow these instructions:**

r, get programs, search draw unit, get blue passcard, l, search palm, get coin, d, d, d, use blue password, open door, d, r, u, go to desk, use pound coin.

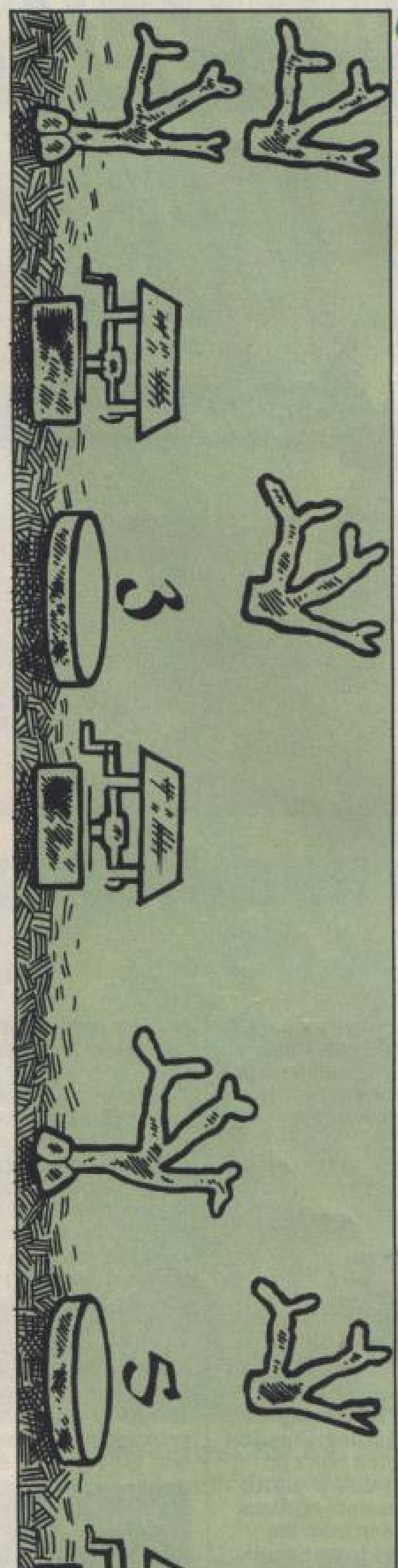
If you keep searching the desk, you keep getting the pound coin – up to 50 more times. And there you have a free (well, sort of) rival to Code Masters's new Fruit Machine Simulator!



LEVEL 6



LEVEL 5



LEVEL 4



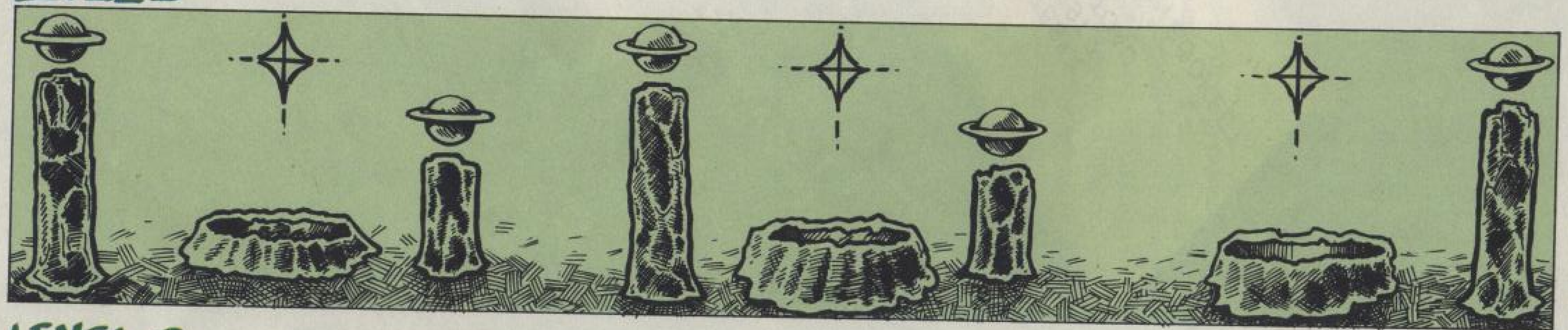
WIZBALL

COLOURS

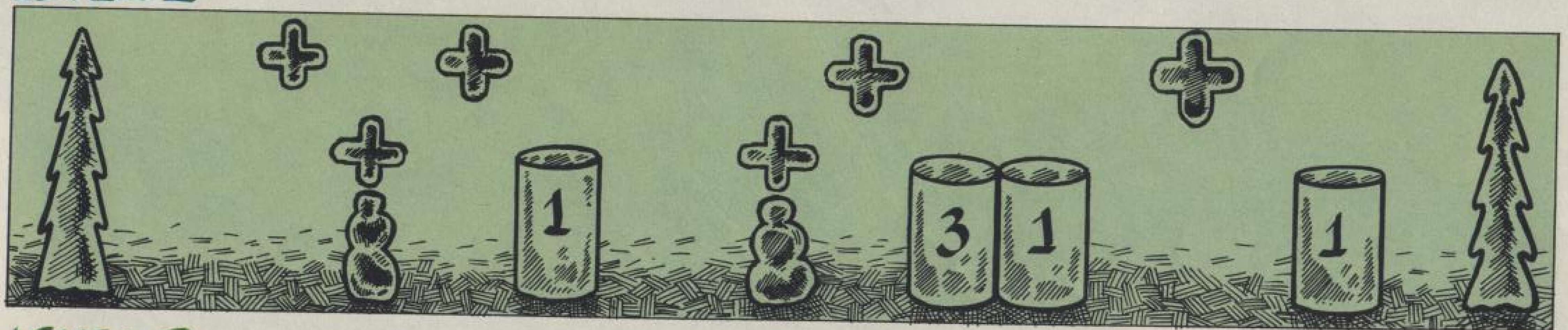
LEVEL	
1	RED, CYAN, MAGENTA
2	GREEN, CYAN, CYAN
3	BLUE, GREEN, CYAN
4	MAGENTA, RED, CYAN
5	YELLOW, RED, GREEN
6	CYAN, GREEN, YELLOW

COMPILED BY LEE DICKENS

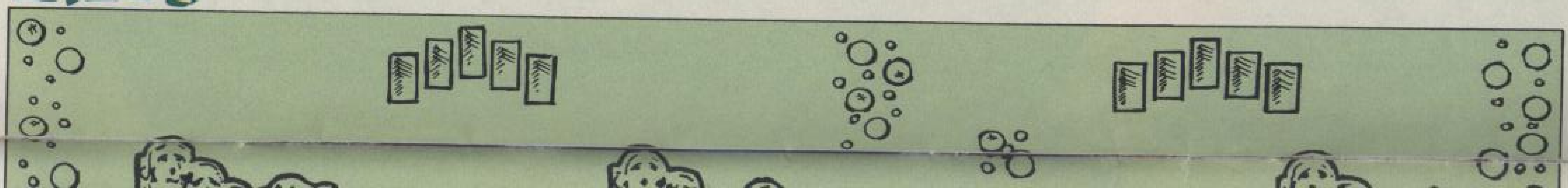
LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2



LEVEL 3



ADVANTAGE.



ZX SPECTRUM+3. £199



The new Sinclair ZX Spectrum +3 is a real hero – because it helps you to be one.

While you're a daring motorbike rider or the all-conquering intergalactic warrior, you're gaining priceless experience in handling computers.

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With the advanced Sinclair technology you can afford to let your imagination go wild. Because at £139, only your enemies pay heavily.

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Please tell me more about the SINCLAIR ZX Spectrum +2 ☐ ZX Spectrum +3 ☐

Name________________

Address________________

SC 3

sinclair

Amstrad plc, Brentwood House, 169 Kings Road, Brentwood, Essex CM14 4EF. Tel: (0277) 262326

CHEAT MODE MOTEL

Ding, ding! Oh drat, there's never anyone at the desk when you want to book in, is there? Well, let's glance through the guest list while we wait . . .

SUITE 1 *INTERNATIONAL MATCHDAY*

Set the handicap to win 99-0 and abort the match as it is about to start – you'll win 99-0!
(occupant: Stephen Kilroy)

SUITE 2 *BUBBLE BOBBLE*

Select the two-player option; if player 1 dies press 1 on the keyboard and you will be alive again
(occupant: Keith Porter)

SUITE 3 *NIGHTMARE RALLY*

When you are asked to enter your name type: CHEVRON to reach level 8, SYMBOLQ for level 4, AVENUE for level 12, or EXHAUST for level 14
(occupant: Paul Rose)

SUITE 4 *BACK TO SKOOL*

When Einstein tries to tell on you, make sure you are sitting on him and then keep your finger on the S key till it's time for your next lesson. He will keep falling off his chair and won't get a chance to utter a word!
(occupant: Ian Morris)

It doesn't look like anyone's going to turn up. Try again next month . . .

STAY ON THE *PARK PATROL*

Here's another POKE to use with Jon North**'s Firebird loader, which *was* correct as printed in the December issue. It gives infinite lives in** Park Patrol.

```
340 DATA 91,8,207,57,195,175,50,189,210,
    195,32,203,705439
```

RENTAPOKE JON

The final instalment from Jon North this month is this little Mastertronic's Rentakill Rita **hack. Those old cleaning blues have set in so these couple of lines should put everything right again . . .**

Load the header of the game by typing MERGE "" and then add these lines:

```
43  POKE 58449,0: POKE 57979,0: REM
    INFINITE LIVES
46  POKE 58515,0: INFINITE SPRAYS
```

Now type RUN and press ENTER

WILL KEVIN SOUTHERN PLEASE STAND UP . . .

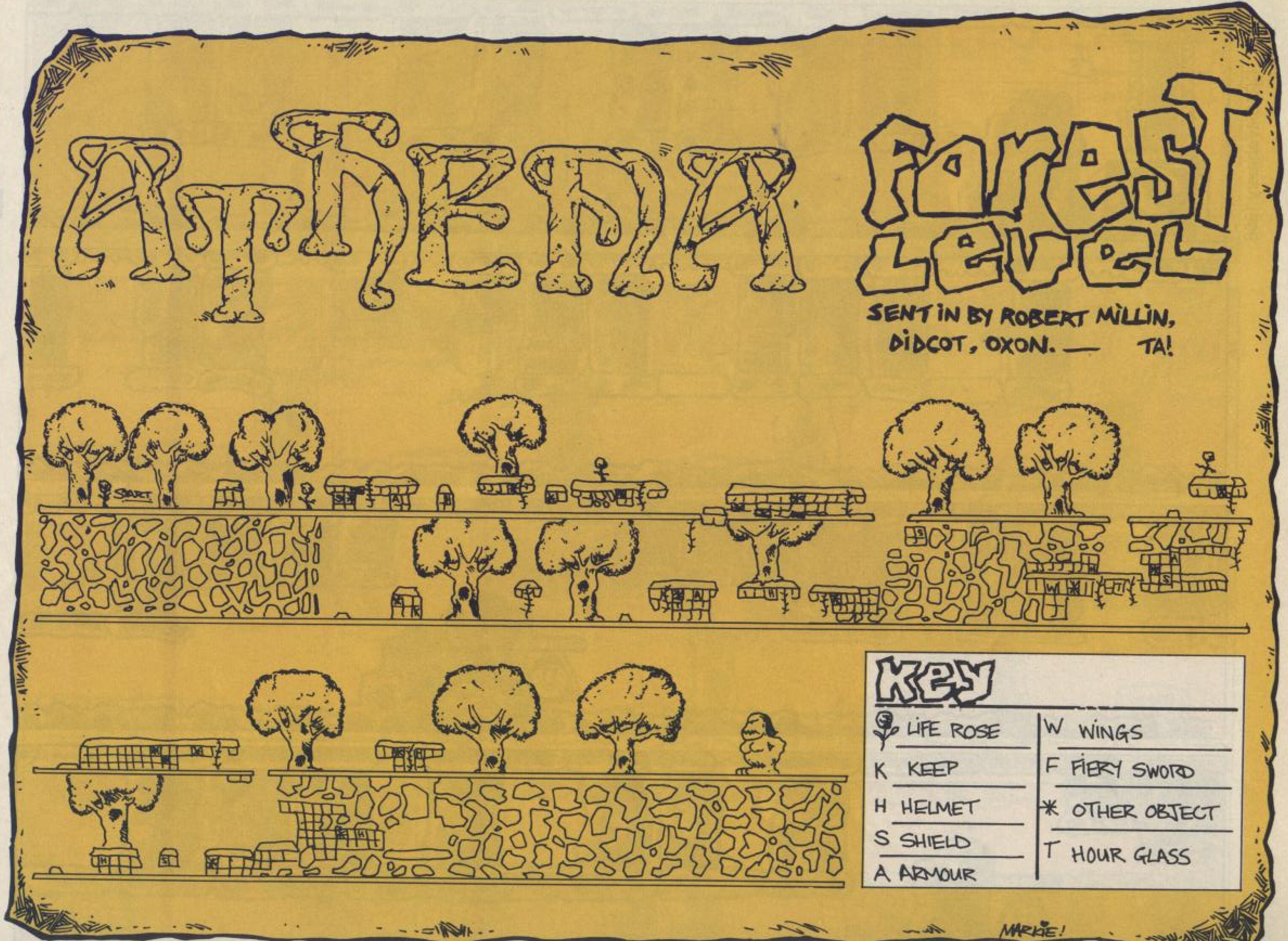
Oh dear, I did it again in the Christmas Special – I only gave away *one* £30 worth of software, to the cartographers who did all the Tai-Pan **maps. But there's still another £30 to award!**

It's going to Kevin Southern **for his** How To Be A Complete Bastard **POKEs. But we haven't got Kevin's address here . . . so please write in with your address and phone number (so I can confirm it's really you), Kevin, because a crisp new £30 note is waiting for you.**

JOE BLADE SHARPENED

Ian Williams **of Bradford wrote this routine to help Players's eponymous hero in his search for six world leaders**

```
5 CLEAR 32767
6 LET T=0: LET W=0
10 FOR F½=5006 TO 65051
15 READ A: POKE F,A
20 LET T=T+W*A: LET W=W+1
25 NEXT F
30 IF T<>94278 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN
   DATA": STOP
40 LET A$="STOP CLOCK": GOSUB 1000
45 IF Q=1 THEN POKE 65026,50
50 IF A$="DOORS ARE UNLOCKED"
   THEN GOSUB 1000
55 IF Q=1 THEN POKE 65029,50
60 IF A$="NO ENEMY" THEN GOSUB
   1000
65 IF Q=1 THEN POKE 65032,50
70 IF A$="INFINITE ENERGY" THEN
   GOSUB 1000
75 IF Q=1 THEN POKE 65035,50
80 IF A$="INFINITE TIME TO SET BOMB"
   THEN GOSUB 1000
85 IF Q=1 THEN POKE 65040,50: POKE
   65046,34
100 PRINT AT 10,4;"START JOE BLADE
    TAPE"
110 LOAD ""CODE
120 RANDOMIZE USR 32768
1000 LET Q=0
1005 INPUT +A$+"(Y/N) "; LINE Q$
1010 IF Q="Y" OR Q$="y" THEN LET Q=1
1020 RETURN
2000 DATA 33,248,221,34,84,254,205,64,
     254,33,0,254,34,132,255,195,44,255,
     62,201,33,80,150,33,2,150,33,140,143,
     33,220,147,62,54,58,43,120,33,1,38,
     42,44,120,195,0,96
```


ATHENA
FOREST LEVEL
SENT IN BY ROBERT MILLIN, DIDCOT, OXON. — TA!
START
KEY
LIFE ROSE
K KEEP
H HELMET
S SHIELD
A ARMOUR
W WINGS
F FIERY SWORD
* OTHER OBJECT
T HOUR GLASS
MARKIE!


W.B.A.


THUNDERCATS
KEY.
DISSAPEARING ROCK
CHANGE WEAPONS
RIVER.
EXTRA LIVES
S-F
START-FINISH!
THANK TO GARETH STYLES OF
NORMANDY, GUILDFORD. TA!
S
F
S

THE SECRET UNMASKED

And here at last is the POKE to make you invincible in Gremlin Graphics's Mask I. It's been sent in, neatly typed in Old English text, by David Martin of Saltburn.

```
1  REM MASK I POKE
5  LET T=0: LET W=0
10 FOR F=32000 TO 32051
15 READ A: POKE F,A
20 LET T=T+W*A: LET W=W+1
25 NEXT F
30 IF T<>161993 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN
   DATA": STOP
35 PRINT AT 10,7;"START MASK I TAPE"
40 RANDOMIZE USR 32000
50 DATA 6,3,197,221,33,0,0
55 DATA 17,17,0,62,255,55,205
60 DATA 86,5,193,16,239,221
65 DATA 33,136,169,17,214,11
70 DATA 62,255,55,205,86,5
75 DATA 33,62,201,34,227,170
80 DATA 33,50,36,34,229,170
85 DATA 62,134,50,231,170
90 DATA 195,242,169
```

LIFE WISH 3

We got a Gremlin Graphics game to go with Death Wish 3, the film starring Charles Bronson, and now we've got a few POKEs to go with the game! Chris Wild of Shaw is responsible for these, and life should be a mite easier after you've typed them in. Multiface 1 owners can just type in

POKE 38678,183:
POKE 39353,183:
POKE 43301,183

. . . which is a bit easier on the old pinkies.

```
10 REM DEATH WISH POKE (C) 1987
20 REM C. WILD AND S. HUNTER
30 CLEAR 32767
40 LOAD "" CODE
50 LET ADD=33117
60 READ N
70 IF N=999 THEN GOTO 100
80 POKE ADD,N: LET ADD=ADD+1
90 GOTO 60
100 RANDOMIZE USR 32768
110 DATA 205,86,5,62,183
120 DATA 50,22,151,50,185,153:
    REM INFINITE AMMO
130 DATA 50,37,169: REM INFINITE INJURY
140 DATA 201,87,73,90,999
```

Thanks to readers Clive Snelling of Crawley, Sussex and Nick Sampson of Chelmsford, Essex, who sent us their indexes of the CRASH Playing Tips

COMPETITION TIME . . .

It's time for another exciting Playing Tips comp – and let's hope plenty of you dare to tackle Dan. Entries for the Driller map comp last month seemed to get lost in the new dimension . . . so I'm still waiting for a *complete* Driller map and the prizes from Incentive are still up for grabs.

The challenge this time is to provide working, non-Multiface POKEs for Virgin Games's Dan Dare II. And the prize is worth hacking for: £30 worth of software plus a fat full-colour book featuring the very earliest Dan Dare comic strips from 1950 and 1951! It's one for the collectors – which is probably why it's called (deep breath) Dan Dare Pilot Of The Future Deluxe Collectors Edition.

Send your entries to the usual address, marking the envelope DAN DARE COMP.

It's good to be back at work after the ten days of 'compulsory' holiday over Christmas. All that lazing about, eating, drinking and being merry is enough to tire any normal Playing Tips editor out, but I can handle it. And I'll be at it again next month with another competition and loads of your POKES, tips and maps. Please send them all to:

NICK ROBERTS
PLAYING TIPS
CRASH
PO BOX 10
LUDLOW
SHROPSHIRE
SY8 1DB

PS: If you send a map *please* draw it in dark ink on white paper – it makes our temperamental artists' lives easier when they come to prepare it for printing.



KNIGHT ORC

PRODUCER: Rainbird
RETAIL PRICE: £14.95 (three tapes)
AUTHORS: Level 9

We're always ready to express our sympathy for the persecuted and the exiled, and in the three-part *Knight Orc* you can take on the role of a persecuted and exiled orc, wandering helplessly around Middle Earth, running the risk of being injured or killed by almost anyone you meet.

As Level 9's text-only adventure begins you are lanced by a knight on his horse. You do survive, but the landscape you find yourself in is far from encouraging. There is a dismal fairground, a hideous-looking castle, and a gallows on the skyline.

And when you set out on foot it's a lonely journey. Ask any of the characters on the road for help, and they all say 'Get lost buster'.

There's no comfort to be found in the Orc's Head Inn, either. It has an 'atmosphere of gloom and depression', and the licensee certainly doesn't serve beer to orcs. If you linger in the pub long enough, violent incidents arise.

But being killed isn't so much a setback as you might have feared. You are promptly carted off to Paradise (or is it Valhalla?), and you can get booted out by a rather stuck-up Valkyrie equally promptly. Your stay in Paradise may not last more than a few seconds – enjoy it while you can, before you resume the trials and tribulations of the game.

The three subgames *Loosed Orc*, *A Kind Of Magic* and *Hordes Of The Mountain King* are each on a different tape and together make up the *Knight Orc* world.

" Never has so much been packed on so few chips for so many. *Knight Orc* is so complex it's an absolute pleasure to play – not so much a game, more of a book in which you can write your own ending. The text is beautifully-written, both interesting and informative story; the vocabulary is extremely user-friendly and 'real' sentences or even paragraphs can be constructed.

But what makes *Knight Orc* so atmospheric is the number of characters roaming about the place – they don't just exist as in most adventures, they actually have lives all of their own, just as much as the player.

The price is hardly high for a game that will supply such long-lasting entertainment and involvement. "
PAUL 93%

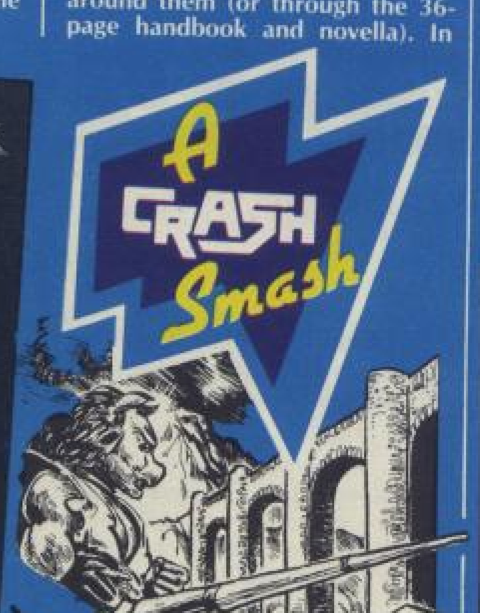
It's a world of magic, with 21 spells to learn, but also a world of woods, glades, spinneys and groves of all kinds of trees, and you can spend much time wandering around them (or through the 36-page handbook and novella). In some parts of the woodland there are golden objects to be found; other areas have nothing at all to offer. Probe every nook and cranny you can, though the program will never tire of telling you that 'that's probably just scenery'. It's an orc's life.

" In *Knight Orc* I'm most impressed by Rainbird's masterly grasp of what even the nonadventurer wants. One of the best features is the ability to examine almost everything within reach; examining the various sorts of trees is an experience in itself! The only problem is the speed with which you can die; if you happen to fall into a fight, then hours of careful adventuring can be gone in a flash. Still, in a game of this complexity, these are the things you have to look out for.

Knight Orc is an atmospheric, intriguing, absorbing (time-consuming) and thoroughly worthwhile adventure. Together with the excellent novella, Level 9's achievement more than justifies the high price. "
MIKE 94%

" *Knight Orc* is a highly complex fantasy adventure, full of murder, mystery and suspense – and the odd piece of wit! A few graphics would have gone down well, but the program is easy to use and the puzzles are challenging. "
NICK 90%





COMMENTS

GRAPHICS: text only
ATMOSPHERE: beautifully-crafted descriptions bring the game to life, and the text-only display allows you to visualize exactly what you want (as gory or as simple as your imagination allows!)
GENERAL RATING: a complex, challenging adventure packed with detail – Level 9's best to date, and that's saying something

Presentation	89%
Vocabulary	92%
Complexity	92%
Addictive qualities	90%
OVERALL	92%

CHRIS HOLLAND meets the three adventure purists behind *Knight Orc*



► Gnome is where the heart is: left to right, Nick, Pete and Mike Austin, the brothers of Level 9

LEVEL HEADS

SOFTOGRAPHY

Smashes all the way

Level 9 was established in 1981 and the Austin team's first releases included *Space Invasion* and *Extended BASIC*. Then the adventures, most of them on the Level 9 label itself, started coming . . .

title	CRASH review
1982	
Colossal Adventure	
Adventure Quest	
Dungeon Quest	
(These three titles were released in one package by Rainbird in 1987 as *Silicon Dreams*)	
1983	
Level 9 starts writing for the Spectrum	
Snowball	9/10 Issue 6
Lords Of Time	recommended Issue 3
1984	
Level 9 begins clue-sheet system for helpless adventurers	
Return To Eden	8/10 Issue 11
Erik The Viking	
1985	
The Secret Diary Of Adrian Mole Aged 13¾	9/10 Issue 23
Emerald Isle	9/10 Issue 16
Red Moon	9/10 Issue 20
Worm In Paradise	9/10 Issue 26
1986	
The Price Of Magik	94% Issue 30
Jewels Of Darkness	94% Issue 36
1987	
Knight Orc (for Rainbird – review this issue))	
Gnome Ranger (on the Level 9 label)	
1988 plans	
Time & Magik (for Rainbird)	
an adventure of Arthurian England (on the Level 9 label)	

You might have thought only shopkeepers live above the shop, but four terraced houses in Bracknell are the offices, workshops and homes of the Austin brothers. They are Mike, Nick and Pete, and they spend most of their time looking after the shop – Level 9 Computing, the adventure factory responsible for *Emerald Isle*, *Gnome Ranger* and now *Knight Orc*.

> “You can get more over with text than with graphics”

When I met them in November they had pretty well decided on the games for 1988 and sadly it looks as though the most interesting, a combined arcade/adventure, game will not be released for the Spectrum. Though the Austins are keeping the story line a secret, it's likely to be a game with text – too much text for the Spectrum's memory.

Level 9's next Spectrum title will appear about Easter, presenting the further adventures of the wonderful Ingrid Bottomlow in a *Gnome Ranger II*. Pete sees her as a sort of young Norah Batty, so perhaps we'll see her before her stockings wrinkle.

Planned for the end of 1988 is a survival game which will involve problems solved for real by Pete Austin in the great outdoors of Berkshire. This will be text-only on the Spectrum – a great loss, considering the graphics in *Gnome Ranger*.

GNOME IN THE USA

Level 9 is branching out into the arcade/adventure field, but it's unlikely the Austins will stray much further yet. They see little prospect of the educational-software market growing large enough to be profitable, and for similar reasons they are unlikely to introduce a budget label – particularly as in the 16-bit market their prices start at £14.95, with many costing twice as much.

They have, however, recently started selling in the USA and have gone in at $19.95 (about £11). That's near the bottom of the price-range there but Pete says 'we do not intend to sell on the basis of price, but of quality.

'It's a bit early to tell how sales are going,' he continues, 'but if it carries on at its present rate, half of our of all our sales will be there.' Four Level 9 titles have already gone on sale in Uncle Sam's great republic: *Silicon Dreams*, *Jaws Of Darkness*, *Gnome Ranger* and *Knight Orc*.

BACK FROM A LONG SILENCE

Commenting on why Level 9's sales have stayed high in a notoriously fickle market, the Austins explain that they always write the games they most wish to play themselves – and have found, so far, that most others like them too.

There was a long silence from Level 9 after *Silicon Dream* – and then two adventures released in quick succession. Mike explains that the gap of almost a year was largely because all Level 9's games were being converted and greatly expanded to run on 16-bit machines – mainly the Atari ST, but also the Amiga. Now this has been completed, and the Austins hope to release four to six games in 1988.

The Austins are confident their games will win, believing no other programmers offer anywhere near enough pure strategy along with the puzzle-solving. Pete, particularly, believes most other adventures simply aren't logical enough, and often contain anachronisms (the credibility of a game is lost if you're in a medieval setting and you find a battery-operated torch, he says, though many players take that as part of the fantasy).

EMBARRASSING TITLES

Another problem is that the titles of many adventures are so long and weird that people find it embarrassing to ask for them in the shop, says Pete. He thinks this is why *The Hobbit* still sells so well – it's a short, simple title which is easy to remember.

Celtic names (real or invented) also get the thumbs down, as they are very difficult for most people to pronounce correctly and if spelled in a more English fashion only offend the Welsh or Gaelic speakers.

A third of Level 9's sales are to women, which is most unusual in the software market. Pete comments: 'I feel that the main way to make women more interested in computers is to change the advertising. Most advertising seems to emphasise the violent aspect of games and while nobody wants things like My Little Pony prancing about, it would be better to point out that computer programs can be interesting, informative and broaden the mind. Unfortunately violence does succeed in selling. If you have an essentially boring concept the best way to jazz it up is to add some blood. This is what Hollywood has been doing successfully for years, but what you really need is a good script.'

> “If you have a boring concept the best way to jazz it up is to add some blood”

He suggests that 'what magazines like CRASH should do, rather than ban violent or overly aggressive advertising, is relegate it to the back of the magazine where it's less obvious'. The perennial argument against that is that many people actually read magazines from back to front.

VOMIT GAMES

All the Austins dislike the kind of game where characters are violently decapitated and a little gnome comes along and kicks the head off the screen. They hope that these games, which they call 'vomit games' after their usual sound effects, are just a passing phase that will disappear as the industry grows up. In their games there is almost no attacking, and in *Gnome Ranger* the worst that happens to anyone is that the witch gets her wand broken.

Even in earlier Level 9 games, where it was sometimes possible to kill characters, they would come back later in the game, as ghosts, and cause more trouble than if you'd left them alone.

THE PUZZLE NOT THE PICTURES

The Austins would also like to change the way that in so many top-selling games all the effort goes into presentation and graphics, rather than gameplay. They say they've always done things the other way round – the important thing has been the puzzle, not just pretty pictures.

Going on to explain how they think adventuring will develop, the Austins all agree that there will be much more interaction between player and nonplayer characters (NPCs). The object is to make these NPCs far more real and to construct puzzles which will be impossible to solve without their cooperation. In other words, the adventure will become more like an interactive book.

'I think that for a long time to come there will be a market for text-only games, in the same way that though many people have videos book sales are still very good,' says Pete. 'You can take in a lot more information by reading than by watching TV. This is why when books are adapted for TV and radio half the plot must be left out. You can get more over to the player by the use of text than graphics – this is especially true of the home computer where graphics are still relatively crude.'

The Austins intend to carry on using graphics – and some movement, such as clouds and rippling water – and more mood music, though they won't put that on the Speccy.

They are also working on a basic problem with all adventuring: though you can read quickly, inputting is very much slower, despite the use of abbreviations. They haven't solved the problem yet. Says Pete: 'I don't like icons. A number of people use them, but they don't give enough flexibility. It then looks like a multiple-choice game, which to me essentially gets rid of too many of the puzzles.'

WIN A FABULOUS PHILIPS COMPACT DISK GHETTOBLASTER

Crash Competition

COURTESY OF HEWSON

PLUS 25 COPIES OF THE FOUR SMASH HITS COMPILATION FOR THE RUNNERS-UP



Hewson are about to launch their second compilation pack, called *Four Smash Hits*. This little beauty contains *Exolon, Uridium +, Zynaps* and *Ranarama*, and is well worth shelling out a tenner for.

If you fancy owning this compilation but can't be bothered to pay for it, you could always enter our competition, which features 25 of them as runners-up prizes.

A small incentive is also on offer in the shape of a copy of the compilation plus a Philips portable CD/cassette/tuner with five-band graphic equaliser and four speaker-system.

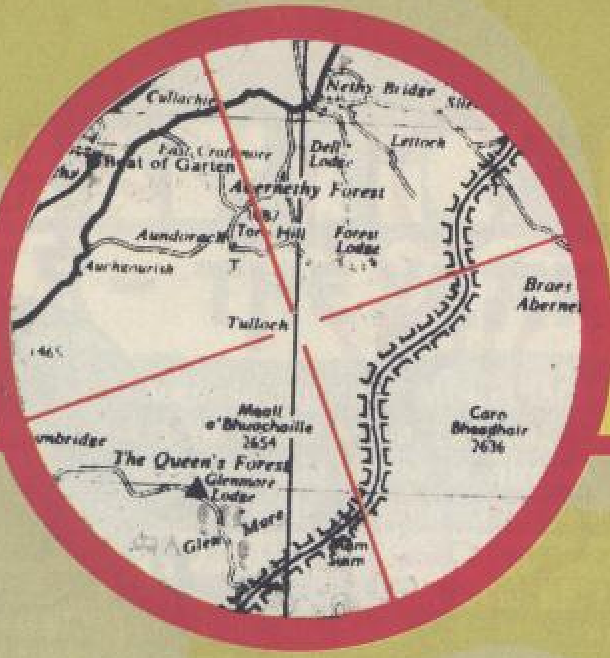
Interested? Good. Find the ten Hewson games hidden in the wordsquare below, and one of these prizes could well be yours (game names consisting of two words or more appear as a connected block).

S	H	S	P	A	N	Y	Z	T	C	C	C	A
O	O	H	A	H	O	M	Z	M	V	U	K	M
R	E	U	A	A	L	U	A	L	G	I	C	A
R	A	P	T	H	O	I	P	S	I	S	A	R
Y	G	N	O	H	X	D	F	P	S	D	T	A
F	L	L	A	O	E	I	A	A	P	R	T	N
O	E	N	Q	R	Z	R	W	N	O	O	A	Y
L	Z	Y	O	F	A	U	N	E	O	S	R	S
K	W	A	C	D	N	M	Q	B	H	S	A	E
S	P	O	R	T	Y	M	A	U	E	D	N	L
H	O	O	D	U	N	I	T	L	M	L	U	G
E	I	Z	P	L	M	O	Q	U	A	M	L	A
D	E	V	E	N	I	N	G	S	T	A	R	E

When you've found the hidden Hewson games, just write the titles on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope with your name and address – and don't forget to put our address on the other side!

It's: HERE'S LOOKING AT HEWSON COMP, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*.

Entries must be received by March 8, and the decision of CRASH's appointed judges is final in all respects. They just may feel like blasting *your* ghetto, so look out.

FRNTLINE

with Philippa Irving



THE DEVIL AND THE 'DEEP' PC

AT LAST, after months of bashing out Frontline on my old battered typewriter, I have a shiny new superconvenient Amstrad PC word processor. With this marvel of fairly modern technology I can rearrange all my sarcastic comments at the touch of a button, instantaneously delete paragraphs of philosophical waffle, change typeface to my heart's content, and even correct my appalling spelling. I am enchanted. I am also discovering for the first time that computers really can be useful.

Obviously computers can play an important everyday role in a business. But it was one of the fanciful fallacies of what the popular press called 'the computer boom' – the flurry of home-computer-buying that has slowed down because most people who want one have now got one – that a home computer could work the same kind of labour-saving wonders. One heard stories of somebody's friend who had 'computerised his home' or ran his central heating with the computer. Parents bought computers in the firm belief that a Spectrum or Commodore would give their child an education in the modern and apparently all-important mystery of the computer, hoping that once they'd got tired of the games that came with it– *Horace Goes Skiing*, *Scrabble*, the immortal *Radar Rat Race* – they would start to put their machines to 'proper' use.

But what really happened was that the child, having got tired of *Horace Goes Skiing* and perhaps found that BASIC could make the border go a funny colour or print 'Dundee United Rules' thousands of times on the screen, would proceed to more sophisticated game software. Parental scorn would start: 'You've not bought another stupid game, have you? I didn't buy that computer so you could spend time playing silly games on it. Why don't you do something useful? Why don't you learn to program?'

Some young computer-owners did indeed learn to program. But what did they program? What was the only thing there was any point in programming? Games!

Perhaps you *could* run the central heating from a Spectrum, but modern heating systems have perfectly adequate control systems of their own. The contents of the freezer can be monitored by opening the door and looking in. The small memory of home computers, and the tacky keyboards of early Spectrum models, preclude serious word processing. In fact, the home computer has only one nongaming function: it provides a kind of familiarisation course for the few schoolchildren who do go on to commercial programming. Whatever uncomprehending parents may believe, a home computer is nothing more than a flexible, fascinating games machine.

And we should not be ashamed of that. It can be frustratingly difficult to convince those who have never come across a good computer game that they can be as valid an intellectual pastime as traditional board games and puzzles; they lack the social aspect of group gaming, but properly used they offer the solo player a wealth of entertainment at his convenience.

It's only prejudice that compartmentalises entertainment, finding live theatre and reading thoroughly good, television dubious, and computer games a mind-rotting invention of the devil. There are bad and good plays and bad and good computer games.

And it is only a more specialised prejudice that considers a poky little home computer – with what is, these days, a tiny memory – wasted on games. Though my gleaming new word processor is a great convenience, and invaluable for processing PBM turns, nothing will convince me to write my novels on it.

SORCERER LORD

Producer: **PSS**
Retail price: **£12.99 (cassette), £17.99 (disk)**

Fantasy games always provide a refreshing alternative to the interminable mud and metal of the Second World War, but it's unusual for a fantasy war game to be as complex as a simulation of a historical battle. It's probably not that authors are incapable of making up detailed statistics, landscapes and backgrounds – more likely they believe that people who want to play fantasy games are less concerned with such fiddly details and want simple combat, lots of *D&D*-inspired races, and the chance to throw fireballs around.

But I for one would love to see a fully-fledged war-gamer's fantasy war game – and with *Sorcerer Lord* the ever-enterprising PSS makes a gallant though flawed attempt.

So don't be put off by the box, which declares that *Sorcerer Lord* is by the author of PSS's *Battlefield Germany*, a game I found almost unplayable (it was credited to Cybercon Enterprises).

Inside the box is a player's manual, a glossy PSS catalogue almost as large as the rulebook, a reference card listing the control keys and the meanings of the symbols, and an extremely well-drawn map of the Lands Of Galanor on sepia fake parchment.

The detailed rulebook opens with The Scenario. And, naturally, sinister and evil twisted ghostie things from the north are marching southward from their wastelands to do battle with the clean-limbed, upstanding, civilised races in the south. It's one of the great mythological patterns of computer war-gaming that the enemy marches from the east if it's historical and the north if it's fantasy.

The citizens of a mysterious region called the Shadowlands have, after several unexciting millennia, acquired a new Shadowlord. His predecessor was a peace-loving sort, but the newcomer wants to stir things up.

The ambitious new Shadowlord has sent his Shadow Legions – not people, but magically-engineered Wolf riders and warriors commanded by misguided humans – to invade the Lands Of Galanor and recapture the enchanted rune rings which were created there by the magic people of the Shadowlands long ago.

The player's task – as the clean-shaven men of Galanor, of course – is to repel the Shadow Legions, preventing them from capturing and holding fortresses and rune rings for more than 12 consecutive days. (If they manage to, they achieve victory.) The fortresses are also the player's only sources of reinforcements, so the more that are in the power of the Shadowlord the less chance Galanor will have to raise troops to recapture them.

There are five different races in Galanor, and all have special characteristics. Elves move and fight well in woodland, of course; the Men Of Rovanium (the most southerly and so naturally the most civilised nation) are skilled in sorcery; and the Mountain Warriors Of Morgalion are adept at fighting in mountainous terrain.

After the opening menu (where you choose one of three skill levels, and can load a previously-saved game), *Sorcerer Lord* launches abruptly into the Shadowlord's first movement phase. In fact, three phases quickly tumble across the screen and the Shadow Legions are already streaming southward before the players gets a chance

to intervene.

Anyone who has played *Battlefield Germany* will recall waiting for 15 minutes while the computer plodded through its turn. I lavished scorn on this appalling piece of programming (it got 42% Overall in Issue 40), and so I'm almost ashamed to admit that *Sorcerer Lord* goes to the opposite extreme with an effect almost as damaging to playability.

The Shadowlord whizzes through his movement phase like *Battlefield Germany* 20 times faster and then – which is more serious – resolves battles so quickly that it's extremely difficult to follow what's going on. A summary of the riders and warriors lost by each side is flashed on the message area for just a few moments.

But most maddening of all is the war report, a full screen of detailed and interesting information about the state of each army and the ownership of the many fortresses and rune rings. This is the sort of thing that one would wish to study at leisure, and frequently. On some versions of *Sorcerer Lord* you can summon it with a keypress at any time; but on the Spectrum, it appears for two seconds – literally – at the end of each combat phase. It's as if the author realised that *Battlefield Germany* is too slow, changed a few variables to a lower value picked at random, and never checked whether the new speed is any more convenient.

The screen map is hexagonal, as in *Battlefield Germany*. The *Sorcerer Lord* map is a little more attractive, though the ragged edges made inevitable by the hexagonal layout are untidy and the contours of the land are blocky. The fortresses, citadels and rune rings are set in a varied landscape of forest, mountains, plains, deserts and the occasional patches of wasteland.

Though there are several hundred riders and warriors stationed in every fortress, they cannot be mobilised without a leader (here *Sorcerer Lord* resembles *Lords Of Midnight*). As the player starts off with about 20 unmanned fortresses and just three leaders under his command, things are rather discouraging. But fortunately, every turn there is a Galanor Alliance phase, when new leaders wake up to the imminent danger and materialise for use in their own fortresses.

Fortresses also generate extra troops at random. And any leader can build up a huge army simply by going round the map recruiting warrior and riders, but this takes time – and meanwhile the Shadow Legions will have taken over the undefended fortresses and rune rings.

The abilities of each army are defined by four factors: the value of its leader, its leader's skill in sorcery, its fatigue level, and its movement rate. Combat between adjacent enemy units is not inevitable; the player can decide to attack by moving onto the enemy's square, which is then marked with a battle sign.

Combat is resolved after the player ends the movement phase, and various factors, including leadership values and terrain type, determine the result.

The most novel factor is Sorcery. If the battle takes place near a rune ring – and the nearer the better – the side which controls the rune ring can take power from it to summon Sorcery. The strength of the Sorcery cannot be predicted, but is affected by the leader's Sorcery skill and distance from the rune ring.

Weak Sorcery merely alters the weather conditions in the caster's favour (perhaps it only rains on half the battlefield . . .), but Devastating Sorcery brings down a whole host of screaming demons on the enemy.

Despite all the imagination that has gone into *Sorcerer Lord*, and the obvious potential for varied and thoughtful tactics, the gameplay is awkward and dull (though technically it's a great improvement on *Battlefield Germany*). The game lacks atmosphere, for all the care that has been put into the packaging.

But some people will find a lot to enjoy in *Sorcerer Lord*, and it's encouraging to see this sort of fantasy war game released at all.

Presentation 80%
The packaging is superb, the programming gauche

Graphics 75%
Attractive, though rather characterless

Playability 64%
Difficult to enjoy

OVERALL 70%
Interesting aspects, but try it out before investing

BLITZKRIEG

Producer: **CCS**
Author: **K Wright**
Retail price: **£9.95**

Blitzkrieg is a large-scale simulation of the German invasion of France in May 1940. It comes from CCS's increasingly reputable designer K Wright, whose previous credits for the company include *Yankee* and the Smash *Napoleon At War* (they earned 87% and 95% Overall respectively in Issues 42 and 34); and don't worry, this well-presented and playable game is nothing to do with Ariolasoft's terrible Commodore 64 *Blitzkrieg*.

A centre-spread map in the nicely-produced rulebook shows the historical plan of attack by the Axis powers, which was of course successful. A diversionary attack was launched from the German border into central Belgium, and while the Allied defences were engaged there two Axis armies got underneath the line to the south, dashed through Switzerland, and made it into France. The campaign forces included armoured divisions, parachute regiments and substantial air support.

Blitzkrieg doesn't let the player manipulate all aspects of the Axis invasion – you can't even distribute those charmingly abstract air-support points common in games of this type – but concentrates on the large-scale movement of the six-division armies.

It bears a strong visual resemblance to programmer Wright's previous games *Waterloo* (from Lothlorien; 92% in Issue 23) and *Yankee*. A clear, attractive map fills the screen without clutter in the margins, and a narrow strip along the bottom contains a menu. Because the menu is squeezed untidily into such a small space, most of the Spectrum's limited display can be given over to the map: the entire play area fills about four screens, scrolls without fuss, and covers the eastern part of France, all of Belgium and Switzerland, most of Holland, and the western extremity of Germany. All are clearly marked onscreen so you don't need the map and can stay glued to the set.

There are seven different types of terrain, including country borders. Units appear as the traditional squares.

This innocuously traditional appearance hides an innovative and unexpected system of play. The player commands the 4th, 6th, 12th and 16th armies, and the Panzergruppe Kleist, and though each army is divided into six units (infantry, armoured or mechanised) it can only be given orders as a whole.

And unlike Wright's earlier games, *Blitzkrieg* does not offer the easy option of overriding the artificial intelligence and placing units individually. The intention is to simulate the uncertainty of a real campaign, where decisions made by commanders pushing counters across boardroom maps cannot always be implemented in real life. Yet it's not as frustrating as one might imagine . . .

Though units cannot be controlled individually, they fight separately. The strength of a unit is expressed in a rough percentage figure, chipped away 5% at a time, and – as in *Yankee* – morale also affects a unit's performance. The stages of morale range from Excellent, which adds 30% to the unit's effectiveness, to Abysmal; it goes steadily down depending on the unit's losses. It seems morale never improves, so I expect most of the army is extremely depressed by the end of the game.

Movement is unusual: the player can try to form lines of units without having control over the individual units. You set the central position for which the army will aim, and can mark right and left flanks to determine how far north and south the units will go.

If the central position is used on its own without a right and left flank, all units will commit themselves to a long narrow front line against the enemy. If, on the other hand, the player sets all three markers as close together as possible, three of the army's six units will hustle tightly forward and three will hang back in reserve.

But everything is very indeterminate. The player can only give orders for the advance and hope that the front-line units will manage to stay roughly together; because terrain takes its toll on movement points, some get on considerably faster than others.

The movement orders are used to dictate the whole army's general intentions. The ATTACK order means every unit will attack every enemy unit it comes within range of, and should be used only when you're convinced that an all-out assault will not be too damaging. DISCRETION is the standard order; the army's commander will weigh up the factors and decide whether to attack an adjacent unit. RETREAT, not a very useful order, limits combat to defence.

Because the armies should be on DISCRETION most of the time, attack decisions are usually out of the player's hands. Once the movement orders have been given, you can just sit back and watch while your side advances and attacks. Movement and combat are displayed in separate phases, at a brisk pace which demands attention. There's no chance to get up and make a cup of coffee or turn over a record, unless you don't mind missing some of the action.

The map scrolls to where movement or combat is taking place and shows each step separately. Even if a unit is attacked by three adjacent units, it defends itself against each in turn, and units don't combine attacks as effectively as in many games.

Terrain modifies the effectiveness of an attack, usually to the disadvantage of the attacker: trying to launch an offensive from the middle of a major river not unsurprisingly puts a unit at a 40% disadvantage. But these terrain effects would be more interesting if you could determine more exactly where units are going to end up.

After a particularly successful combat, a unit may advance into a space left by a retreating or routed enemy. Or at the end of the combat phase a unit may disband and redistribute its strength automatically to other units.

There are various victory conditions – or, rather, conditions which will end the game. Play is terminated if the effectiveness of either army falls too low, if the Germans make it to the key city of Amiens near Paris, if even a single Allied unit gets through the German lines, or if the German armies don't get far enough west. Victory is then decided simply on the effectiveness of the two ▶

armies, and the Axis side wins if it seems France is likely to fall in the circumstances. This abrupt cutoff can be frustrating, but you can choose to carry on.

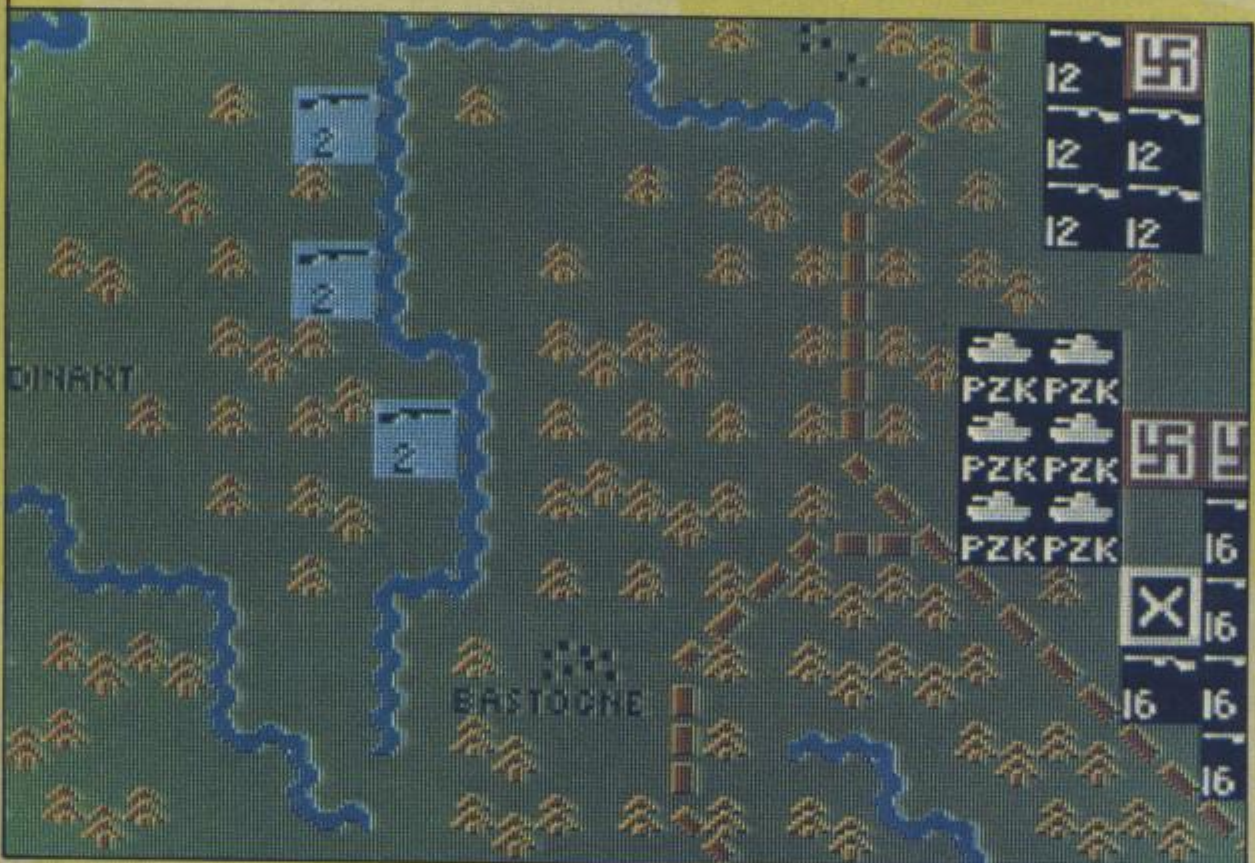
On my first attempt at *Blitzkrieg* I made the same mistake as the Allies did in committing myself to a static war of attrition. But the way to be successful is to advance as quickly and aggressively as you can, and I found to my satisfaction that the Allies shrank back readily in the face of a forward thrust. On my third game I got a 'substantial German victory', but that was only on the first level; there are three.

Though there are many restrictions – you can only play the Axis side, there's no two-player option and you can't position units exactly – the quality and playability of *Blitzkrieg* make the lack of frills irrelevant. It's fascinating, compulsive and so straightforward to control that nothing interrupts the flow of gameplay. The game only drags in the earliest movement phases, where – as in *Yankee* – one has to watch the map scrolling around blank expanses while invisible enemy units move.

The substantial rulebook gives historical background and a clear description of the game's mechanics – and, as is becoming standard, the programmer pleads his cause and anticipates criticism by defending the idiosyncrasies of his game.

Blitzkrieg is thoroughly recommended to everyone, whatever their preference in games. Its straightforward operation won't bewilder someone unused to wargames, yet its possibilities are complex enough to challenge experienced strategists. Most important of all, it's fun to play.

► **Terrain, morale and unit strength can win or lose the day on this clear, well-scrolling screen**



Presentation **89%**
Almost immaculate

Graphics **90%**
Minimalist and extremely effective, with space used well and the onscreen map clearly marked

Rules **85%**
Thorough and well-presented

Authenticity **80%**
Unusually fast-moving and atmospheric for a traditional game

Playability **93%**
Compelling and absorbing

OVERALL **90%**
Definitely worth buying

CRASH & SPECTRUM SOFTWARE HISTORY BINDERS

Lloyd Mangram's successful CRASH & Spectrum Software History, which was concluded last issue, adds up to 96 pages: 48 pages telling the four-year story of CRASH magazine and the Spectrum software world, and 48 full-colour reproductions of CRASH covers by artists Oliver Frey and Ian Craig.

Rather than leaving the CRASH & Spectrum Software History in several separate issues, many readers will want to keep the collection together.

And so CRASH & Spectrum Software History binders are now available by mail order for £4.50 each (£6.50 outside mainland UK), postage and packing included.

That price includes reprints of Lloyd Mangram's Lookbacks for the years 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1987, and a selection of special articles on the development of the Spectrum and its software.

These, together with other recently-published material designed for the binder, form a unique CRASH book of over 150 pages (complete with title and contents pages).

The firm blue binders, similar to the annual CRASH magazine binders (which are available through the Hypermarket on page 82) and subdivided into sections with sturdy plastic rods, have room for:

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- *Lloyd Mangram's four Lookbacks at the years 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1987*
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We name the guilty men: this month's King Grub was written by Richard Burton **of Helston, Cornwall TR12 6RB, who won the CRASH King Grub comp in Issue 46, and drawn by our resident Grubster Markie Kendrick**

Winners in full .... *page 114*

The CRASH & Spectrum Software History

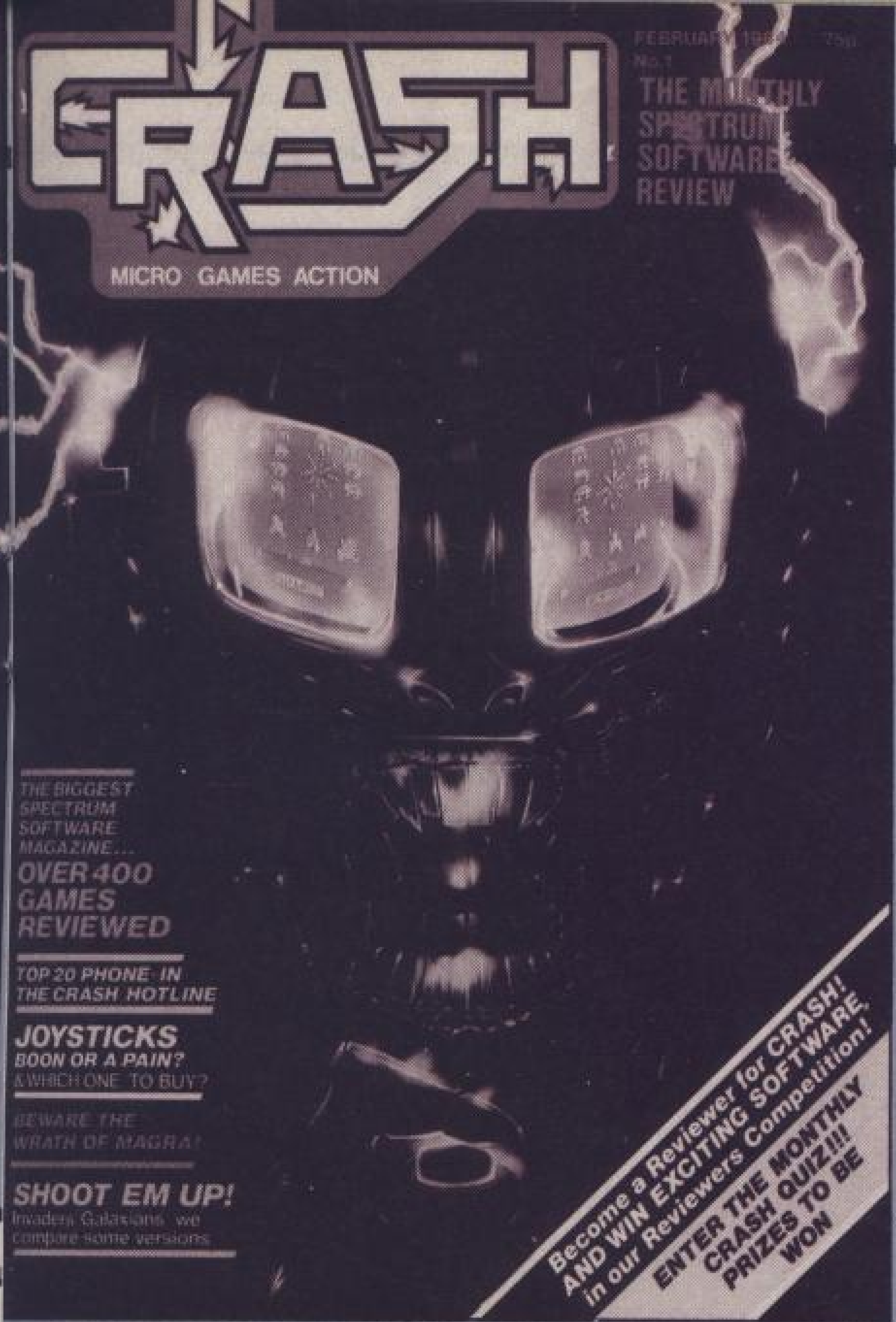
THE CRASH DIRECTORY
PLAYING TIPS AND MAPS

This index lists all the playing tips and maps published in CRASH in Issues 1 to 48 inclusive. The following information is given:

title description of tip **issue**/page

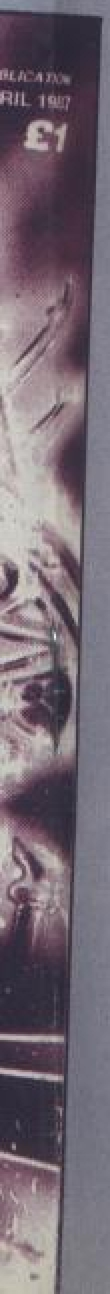
The symbol ∞, which is the mathematical symbol for infinity, denotes 'infinite'. (Thus '∞ lives' means that the tip gives you infinite lives.)

The letter L before a figure means 'Level': thus 'L1 solution' means that the tip is a solution to Level One of the game.

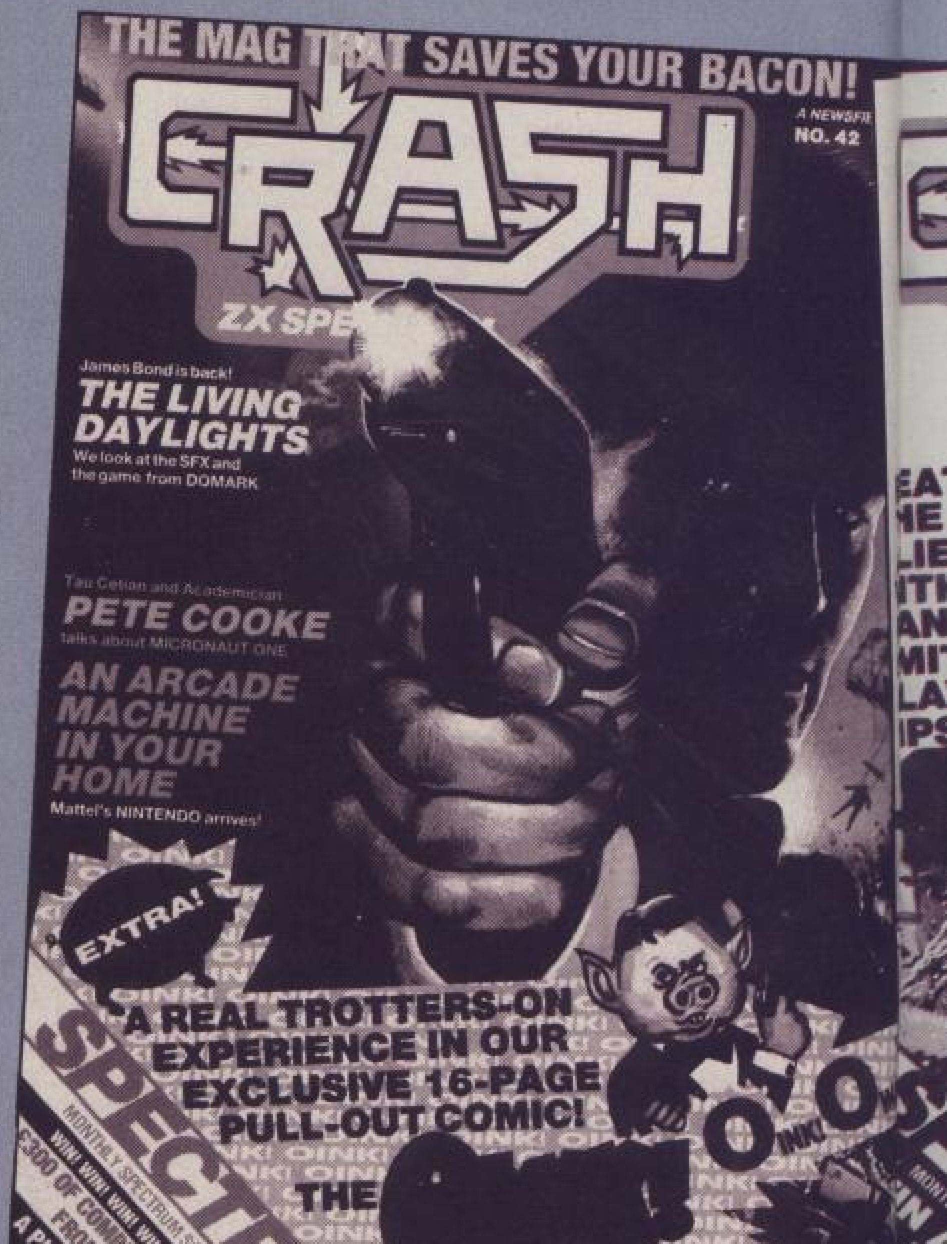

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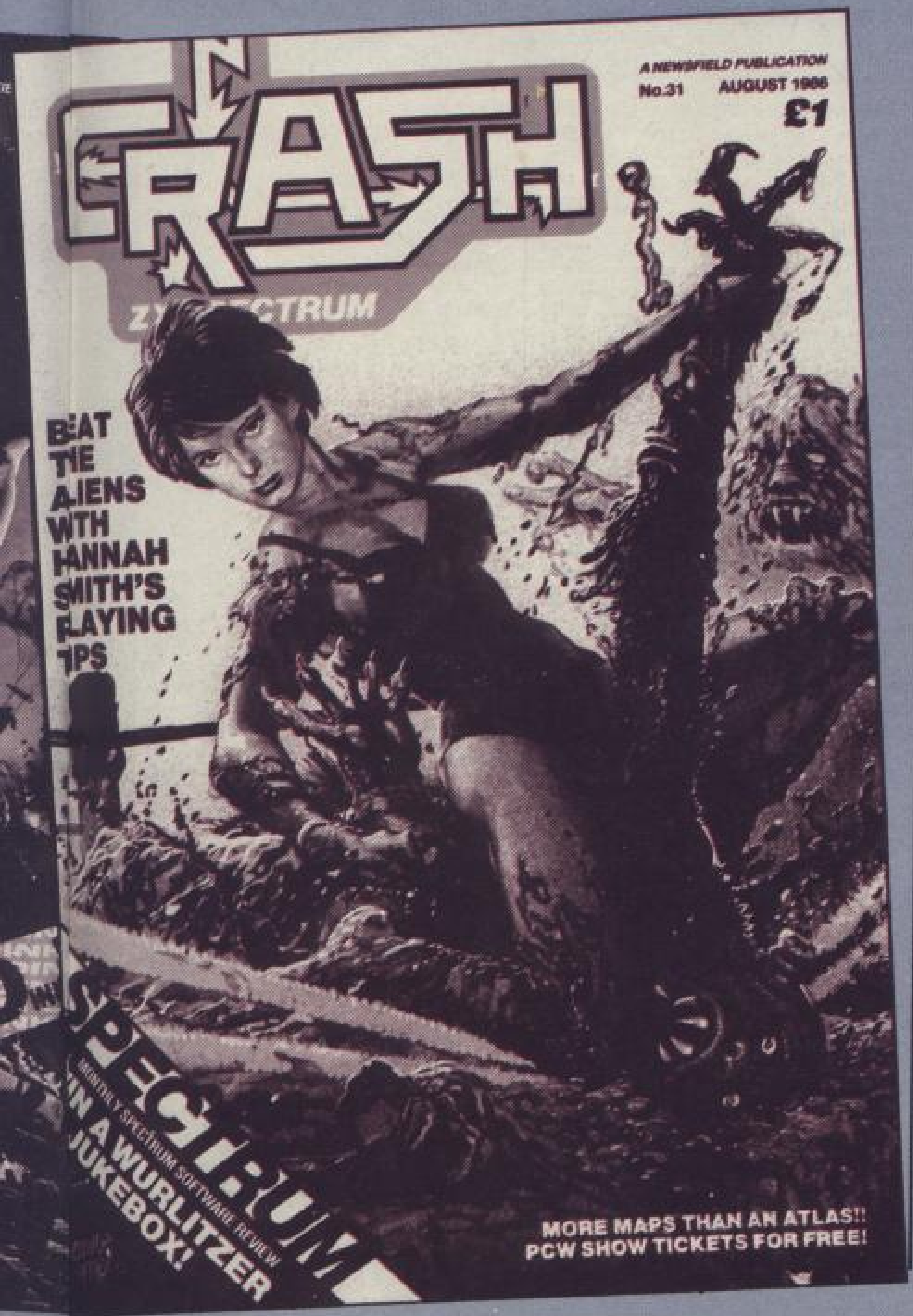


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THE CRASH DIRECTORY MAJOR FEATURES

This section of The CRASH Directory lists all the major features – programmer interviews, profiles of software houses etc – published in CRASH Issues 1 to 48 inclusive. (It doesn't include regular sections such as Tech Niche, Run It Again and The CRASH Challenge.)
The following information is given:

subject of article — **issue**/page

YOU'LL WANT TO READ THEM ALL . . .

Past issues of CRASH are available from the back-numbers service advertised in the CRASH Hypermarket, which details the contents of each available issue

TECH NICHE

TECH NICHE



JON BATES talks to himself about Casio's favourite synth

MAKING WAVES

OVER the past few months a steady trickle of mail has plopped over the threshold of the Bates Motel. Much of it has referred to a series of synths that seem tailor-made for low-budget music setups. I refer of course to the CZ series from Casio.

Casio has always made its mark in the low-budget end of the music market with some notable successes, such as the 'VL tone' keyboard, and one or two clangers – the keyboard that combined with a ghetto blaster, for instance. Anyway, Casio signed up the revered 'classical' synthesist Isao Tomita a few years back as design consultant.

Whether this had any effect I don't know, but in any case a 49-note minikeyed synth, the CZ-101, was launched at the beginning of 1985 after a few rumblings and sneak previews in the music press. With it was the discovery that Casio was using an entirely new form of sound-generation – phase distortion.

FANCY MATHS

The principle of phase distortion is that the angle of the original waveform can be distorted by some fancy maths applied to the wave table as it streams out of the ROM. The beauty of the system is that the level of induced distortion can be governed to a user-preset level set in a manner not unlike the analog synthesizer's filter envelope.

Casio carried this a little further and offered a choice of waveforms to be distorted and combined, plus other goodies like selectable envelopes with up to eight stages if you wish, ring-modulation, noise and two sound sources that can be combined or tuned against one another. In short, there's an awful lot in the CZ-101.

More importantly, the MIDI specs are very favourable. The CZ-101 has a mono mode that allows you to play four different sounds monophonically over four different channels. It's excellent for cheapo MIDI sequencing and multitracking, but its big drawback is that it can only accommodate 16 voices. The factory presets don't help either – they're a pretty weedy bunch.

There is a cartridge you can insert that adds another 16 voices to your CZ-101, but really this is where it falls in the face the competition; the Yamaha DX100 offers 256 voices without so much as an external source in sight. But the DX range will not respond to more than one MIDI channel at a time.

The original price for the CZ-101 was £395, but this was soon undercut and nowadays you can pick one up at a real bargain prices – £150 or less. The cheap and simple short cut to the indifferent sounds is to buy them. A quick flip through the ads of any high-tech music magazine will reveal quite a few companies marketing books of patches (as synth voices are termed).

But where does the Spectrum come into this? The application of a computer to a MIDI instrument *should* put us in control of the whole instrument and all its secrets – but it depends how generous the manufacturers have been in allocating MIDI codes. The CZ series (101, 1000, 3000, 1) allows us to control musical peripherals quite well, though velocity sensing (touch sensitivity) is only available on the more expensive models. It will also allow us access to the Exclusive part of MIDI and allow you to program and store voices from any suitable input device, in this case the Spectrum.

INTERFACES

Obviously to write music into the computer and to have the CZ play it back is the first function of a Spectrum/CZ setup. If you have a Spectrum 128K it's not so much of a problem – the RS232 socket can serve as a MIDI OUT port. But if you have only 48K under your fingers there is only really one way out – to purchase a bespoke interface and program.

Really there are several paths with MIDI and the CZ. It depends on your particular needs, the state of your piggy bank, and what Spectrum you have.

If you want to write and record music and program the voices from the 48K Speccy, you have a choice of either the Micon interface from XRI systems or the Ram/Flare Music Machine. These voice-edit programs have been reviewed in full in CRASH Issues 38 and 34 respectively; the gist of it is that the programming peripherals are displayed onscreen in full instead of on LCD in part, and it's very easy to see what you've done and need to do.

There is also a very useful voice-storage feature which gives you a greatly enhanced voice bank and instant access to the voices in it.

Both interfaces support quite a wealth of software, including a CZ program is one of them; indeed, the Micon interface and Music Machine are very similar in approach. An added bonus is that the Music Machine samples sounds as well, and there's lots of software springing up to support this well-designed interface, including an eight track MIDI recorder (see Issue 45). (All addresses for information appear at the end of the article.)

INTERFACELESS

It goes without saying that all 48K programs will run on the 128K, though they rarely use the full memory capacity. But what if you don't have an interface? Well, there are still a couple of options left. Life is a little more difficult with a 48K and no MIDI interface but not impossible – that is, if you have an Interface 1 at your disposal.

Gary Chambers, late of Newport, Gwent, devised a voice-programming program for such a setup. You can write to him for details of his new CZ editing program. He has sent me details of a basic MIDI OUT routine for the Interface 1 which is as follows:

```
10 CLEAR 65199
20 FOR f=65200 TO
   65275: READ a :
   POKE f,a: NEXT f
30 SAVE "midiout"
   CODE 65200,76
40 DATA 14, 144, 243,
   38, 1, 62, 0, 211,
   247, 12, 205, 241,
   24, 211, 247
41 DATA 15, 205, 241,
   254, 211, 247
42 DATA 15, 205, 241,
   254, 211, 247
43 DATA 15, 205, 241,
   254, 211, 247
44 DATA 15, 205, 241,
   254, 211, 247
45 DATA 15, 205, 241,
   254, 211, 247
46 DATA 15, 205, 241,
   254, 211, 247
47 DATA 15, 205, 241,
   254, 211, 247
48 DATA 124, 205,
   241, 254, 211, 247,
   251, 201, 6, 3, 16,
   254, 214, 0, 0, 0, 0,
   0, 201
```

► **Tailor-made for a low budget: Casio's CZ-101 synth**



To use the program POKE 65201+n, where n is the value to be sent through MIDI. Then RANDOMIZE USR 65200 to actually send the value. Using this it is possible to send MIDI commands for notes, and any other Systems Common commands.

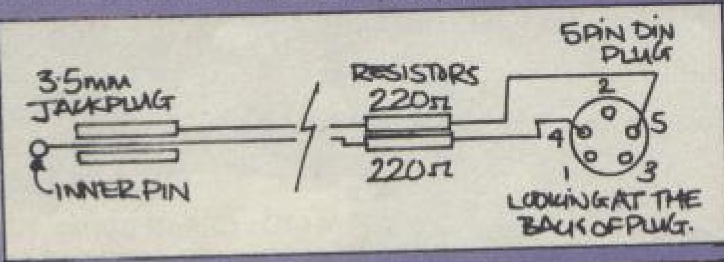
If typed in as printed, it will save to tape. (Remember to CLEAR 65199 when reloading.) The diagram shows how to connect the MIDI plug to either of the NET ports.

With luck we'll see the full programming version, which works on both MIDI IN and MIDI OUT, in the fullness of time. And the old game *Zombie Zombie* from Quicksilva will also emit MIDI from the NET port, so it may be worth looking for as a cheap alternative.

THE 128 CONNECTION

Over to the 128 department: there's sno voice-programming available here yet from the MIDI output, but quite a lot of useful stuff for the Z codes.

Your friendly 128 handbook is quite helpful when you're trying to access MIDI. You can either solder the ends of your fingers off and connect pins 1 and 5 on the RS232 port to pins 4 and 5 on the MIDI DIN plug, or you can spend just under a tenner on a lead made up by Cheetah.



MIDI CONTROL CODES

IN MIDI codes, the prefix Y sets the MIDI channel, V is velocity (not much use on a CZ-101), and Z prefixes the all-important control codes.

Most of the codes here are fairly short and most consist of three bytes.

The first byte gives the type of command and channel number (MIDI code 176 for channel 1, 177 for channel 2 etc).

The second byte says what the command is for – vibrato, portamento, etc. For instance, 1 indicates vibrato.

The third byte is used to turn a function on or off or to set a range in between. 0 turns off, 127 turns on.

Thus to set vibrato on channel 1 is: Z176 Z1 Z127
And to turn it off again is: Z176 Z1 Z0

Considering the first byte:
Program (voice) change: Z192 (can be 193, 194 etc)
Pitch bend: Z224

Considering the second byte:
To change portamento time: Z5
To change the master tune: Z6
To turn portamento on or off: Z65
To turn on mono mode: Z 126 (the third byte in this case is 1, 2, 3 or 4, defining the number of channels to follow)

Program (voice) numbers start at Z00 so:
Presets are Z0-15
Internal voices are Z32-47
Cartridge voices are Z64-79

Degree of pitch bend Z0-Z127
(Beware of this one, though – it's usually sent in great streams of data and not as a single control: you can reset to central position with a code of 64.)

Systems-exclusive messages
These need up to eight bytes

begin system exclusive: Z240
Casio ID code: Z68
sub status: Z0
sub status: Z0
data command: first byte
data command: second byte
data command: third byte
end of exclusive: Z247

Within the systems-exclusive area
Tone mix is controlled by Z112 (tone mix on), Z65-Z73 (mixing level), and Z1-Z9 (tone mix off)
Transpose is Z112, Z65 Z (new key)
(G to B: 69 to 65
C to F#: 0 to 6)

By putting the **mono mode** code in your 128 program you can give four music lines individual channel numbers and play them on the CZ simultaneously from the 128. But mono mode is a little peculiar: though you can have four channels simultaneously, you have to have them consecutively numbered and the starting channel will be the lowest.

(Thanks to **Mark Roberts** of Dover for supplying some codes)

NEXT MONTH
In next month's Tech Niche special I'll be considering lots of extras for the Spectrum, answering yet more of your enquiries, and revealing the secret behind all these stuffed birds, old ladies and Bates Motels that creep into the column. It's on sale February 25.

Write to me with your Spectrumusical problems at **CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 IDB***. (Of course, I can't give individual replies by post.)

CONTACTS

Casio provides a super comprehensive *Guidebook For MIDI* which includes all the codes for talking directly to the CZ – and runs a Casio MIDI club. *Unit 6, 1000 North Circular Road, London NW2 7JD* ☎ (01) 450 9131

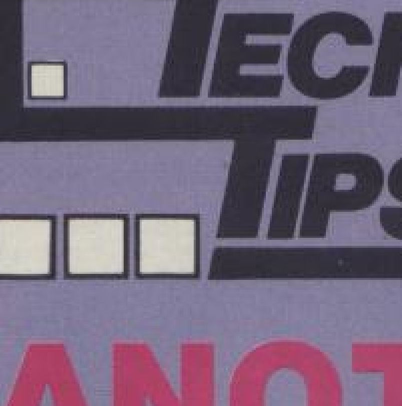
Ram Music Machine Owners Club: Al Straker, *1 Hillcrest Court, Shoot-Up-Hill, London NW2 3PG* ☎ (01) 452 1916

Gary Chambers: *4 Sunnycroft, Portskewett, Newport, Gwent NP6 4RY*

XRI Systems: *10 Sunnybank Road, Wylde Green, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B73 5RE* ☎ (021) 382 6048

TECH TIPS

ANOTHER AMSTRAD-CRUSHER



SIMON N GOODWIN finds another fine disk interface in MGT's Plus D and gets rhythm with the SpecDrum System Two

IF YOU'RE planning to upgrade your Spectrum, the new Plus D interface from Miles Gordon Technology – MGT – is definitely worth a look. It's well-designed and amazing value for money.

For £50 you get a disk interface, parallel printer port, sophisticated software to control both these,

and a simple snapshot device that lets you print screens or save programs of any size to disk.

A 780K 3.5-inch disk drive costs an extra £80 if you buy it at the same time as the interface. You can use any standard 40-track or 80-track drive, but you'd have to be very well-connected to beat the price of the MGT drive.

The Plus D was designed by Bruce Gordon, who invented the popular Disciple interface two years ago. That was a competitor for the grandfather of all Spectrum interfaces, Sinclair's aptly-named Interface One. The £90 Disciple is still available from Rockfort Products.

The Plus D might be viewed as a cut-down version of the Disciple, but that would be unjust. The Plus D is a complete, coherent product. It lacks the Disciple's through-port, joystick and network connections, but still works with the many programs that have been converted to use the Disciple's disk and printer interfaces.

FITS ANY SPECTRUM

£49.95 buys you a plain black metal box, not much bigger than a single cassette case. An edge connector protrudes from one end of the box, and plugs into the back of your computer. Two IDC (bed-of-nails) sockets are flush with the other end of the box: one connects to the printer, the other to one or two disk drives. A red light and a small reassuringly rubbery button garnish the top of the box. That's it.

The Plus D fits any type of Spectrum, as it pokes out from the back of the computer rather than vertically upwards. You need about 12cm of clearance at the back of the computer; it's best not to use the legs at the back of a Spectrum + or 128K, as they would leave the Plus D hanging precariously by its connections.

The metal box isn't just there to make the unit feel chunky – it also acts as a heat sink, keeping the Plus D cool and shielding it from radiated interference.

Inside, there's a neat double-sided circuit board holding a custom PAL chip, a standard 1772 disk controller, 8K of ROM and 8K of RAM, a latch for data being sent to the printer, and eight 'glue' chips to tie the rest together. Two of these chips have been soldered piggy-bank style on top of other components - this looks ugly but shouldn't cause any problems.

The RAM holds part of the disk-control and printer-control code, and is loaded from disk or cassette when you turn on the system and type RUN. This arrangement makes the Plus D flexible, though arguably it's unnecessary. You don't need to reload after a reset, unless the system has crashed or been turned off since the last load. Clever hackers can even run short routines in the Plus D's internal memory without disturbing the main programs.

MANUAL AND MAGAZINE

The Plus D comes with two A5 leaflets – a user's manual and a 'free introductory issue' of *FORMAT*, the magazine of the Disciple and Plus D users' group. The main manual is 24 pages of daisywheel type, stuffed with useful information, readable but very dense. There's no index.

This manual is filled with useful practical tips that stem from experience, but it does not document the Plus D completely – some of the error messages are not listed, and several technical features are only mentioned in passing. It's a good manual, but would nevertheless benefit from a rewrite.

The magazine *FORMAT* is a gas, with a great mixture of technical articles, advice and gossip. Subscriptions cost £10 a year, and if I were buying a Plus D as a present I'd be sure to include a subscription. User groups like this one make the purchase of add-ons fun, rather than a risk.

GETTING STARTED WITH CLIFF RICHARD

When you first get your Plus D you must load a cassette to tell the interface about your set-up. The program loads after about three minutes, displays a neat animated screen and BEEPs out Cliff Richard's sixties Eurovision hit *Congratulations*! Three tidy screens of text follow, and you're then asked to specify the details of your disk drive and printer, in a nonthreatening question-and-answer sequence.

There are some memorable printer options, like a facility to print Spectrum user-defined and block graphics. There's a fast screen COPY option, and a slower shaded printout. The program initially assumes you've got an Epson printer; it's easy to customise the control codes sent, as long as you've got something similar and can find your way around its manual.

When all the questions have been answered you are invited to put a blank disk in the drive so that the machine can format it and stash away the system details. After making extremely sure you've put the right disk in, the little light on top of the Plus D goes out, to show that the disk is busy. It takes about a minute and 40 seconds to initialise a 780K disk.

THE MAGIC BUTTON

The easiest way to use the Plus D is via the magic button on the top. You can load games or other programs as normal, and then press the button at the point at which you want to SAVE them. The button freezes the program temporarily and fills the border with a pattern, while the system waits for you to press a key.

The digits 1 and 2 print the screen out, in either format. Key 3 saves the screen as a disk file. 4 saves an entire 48K program, including the screen. 5 saves 128K, and X restarts the program.

This snapshot mode is relatively simple. You can't choose file names, enter POKEs or check if a disk is full. Beware, even if you think there's enough free storage to hold a program – the Plus D can fit no more than 80 files on a disk, and if this limit is exceeded attempts to save will fail and give no message.

When saving a 128K program, you must tell the interface which of the two possible screen displays the program was using, so the right one is picked when the snapshot reloads. If the picture changes part way through the SAVE, you must enter Y to tell the Plus D to choose the other screen; otherwise, type N.

The manual says that a 48K program saves in 'just over three seconds' – in fact I measured the time, including a period of directory-searching that precedes most file actions, at about eight seconds, or 16 for a 128K file. Loading takes about half this time. Speeds vary a bit depending upon your drive and what's already on the disk, but Plus D Snapshots should be fast enough for almost anyone!

Snapshot files are not compressed as they would be by the Multiface, but you can still fit 16 48K snapshots, or six 128K ones, on a single disk. I couldn't find any programs that could not be saved at the press of the button, but programmers and hardware-designers compete constantly in this area, so there are probably one or two resistant games around.

The Plus D is fairly compatible with programs designed to work with microdrives. It recognises the same BASIC commands as Sinclair's Interface 1 and also handles the hook codes that machine-code programmers are supposed to use.

Sadly Sinclair made rather a mess of these codes, so many existing programs jump straight into the microdrive code. This works OK with Interface 1, or with a Swift Disc as long as you've got their *Emulator* loaded so the disk code mimics the microdrive very accurately. Unfortunately such jumps usually crash the Plus D.

Beta BASIC and all the HiSoft compilers are among the programs which work without problems. I found that *Laser Genius* and Cheetah's *Sound Sampler* were painlessly converted to run from disk by their microdrive loaders, but the *Sound Sampler* couldn't LOAD or SAVE to disk. *Laser Genius* would SAVE and LOAD files, but the CAT command crashed the system, as did references to microdrive 2.

If you want to use software designed to work from microdrive with a Plus D you ought to ask MGT or the user group about it first.

DISK BASIC

The Plus D recognises Interface 1 commands, and many useful variations of its own. It allows microdrive syntax, to suit existing microdrives and the Plus D at the same time. Alternatively, you can use MGT's own simplified syntax.

LOAD and SAVE work with all the usual file types, and SAVE D1 "name1" TO D1 "name2" lets you copy files around a disk, or from one drive to another. Unfortunately this won't copy snapshots or files created with the OPEN command. Copying is quite fast, even with a single drive, but it overwrites the program in memory, so you should SAVE that first.

There are two types of CATalogue: one lists disk filenames in three columns, while the other gives full details of each file, including its number, size and location, line by line.

If you're after a quick getaway you can load any snapshot by just typing LOAD, followed by P, followed by the catalogue number of the file. This trick doesn't work for ERASE, the command to delete a file, because that would make it too easy to delete a file by accident.

You don't have to supply full filenames, even so. Most commands work with wild-card

symbols – for instance, a question mark stands for any letter, and an asterisk stands for any sequence of character, so

ERASE D2 "Snap*"

erases all the files with names starting 'Snap' on drive 2. This will include all the snapshot files, which are given arbitrary names when the system creates them. Later you should rename them with a command like

ERASE D1 "SnapC1A" TO "TechTips"

OPEN and CLOSE set up files, accessed with PRINT and INPUT or INKEY$. The normal microdrive syntax is extended so you can explicitly say whether you want to read or write a file, but you can't use random access to skip around a file at will unless you're also using the latest version of *Beta BASIC* – a fine add-on for serious BASIC programmers, but £16 extra.

As compensation, everyone gets direct access to the disk surface, in 510-byte lumps, via the hacking commands LOAD @ and SAVE @. POKE @ commands let you change the system configuration as a BASIC program runs. LLIST and LPRINT send programs and data to the printer port of your choice, and SAVE SCREEN$ copies the display to the printer.

MOVE transfers data from one stream to another. 128 BASIC crashes if you try to MOVE a file to the screen, but 48K BASIC lets you MOVE data to any device.

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

At its £129.95 total price (including the 780K-capacity 3.5-inch disk drive), the Plus D system is strongly recommended to anyone frustrated by cassette loading. It's even worth considering just as a printer interface, if there's a possibility you'll want disks in future.

Sixword's £150 Swift Disc system (reviewed in CRASH Issue 44) is still competitive, particularly if you're interested in upgrading from a microdrive system. Both the Swift and the Plus D have unique features, and they're much closer in price than any competitors.

Amstrad's Spectrum +3 has serious compatibility problems and needs a £45 Multiface 3 before it can even approximate to the performance of an older Spectrum with a third-party disk.

Post-Christmas trade rumour has it that the +2 sold quite well but the +3 bombed, in the absence of much software on the slow and pricy three-inch disk format. It won't be surprising if there's a further big cut in the price of the +3 soon, following the £50 cut to £199 in September. Even so, I don't think it will tempt many people who already own Spectrums – in particular 128Ks – away from the Plus D or Swift systems, which are superior upgrades.

SPECDRUM SYSTEM TWO

CHEETAH'S SpecDrum package is one of the most versatile and successful add-ons you can get for the Spectrum, as more than 40,000 users have already discovered. Two years after the launch of the product it is still selling, and Cheetah has just released an add-on package, unimaginatively called the SpecDrum System Two, for owners of the original device.

The SpecDrum produces very authentic drum and rhythm sounds by replaying samples – large tables of numbers that describe sound waves – through a black box that plugs into the back of any Spectrum.

The principle is similar to that used in a compact-disc-player, and though the SpecDrum isn't as accurate as a CD machine it's still a very convincing way to replay short percussive sounds under computer control. SpecDrum sounds have been heard on TV and radio programs, and even in adverts.

The basic SpecDrum costs £30 and consists of an interface to fit on the back of the computer, with a trailing phono lead to convey sounds to an amplifier. The cassette software lets you play around with a 'kit' of up to eight short sounds at a time; the sounds are arranged in three groups, and you can play any one sound from a group at any time.

If you use sounds from several groups at once the SpecDrum automatically mixes the sounds together. Most other devices – notably the RAM Music Machine – play short snatches of each sound in turn, giving a less convincing effect.

The original SpecDrum software lets you string together drum patterns on the screen and replay them at any tempo. Alternatively, you can enter the rhythm for each drum individually, by tapping a computer key as the rest of the pattern plays.

The System Two will suit real drummers better, as it lets you control all eight sounds directly from adjacent keys on the keyboard.

SOUND CONTROL

The main advantage of System Two over the original SpecDrum software is that it allows more control over the drum sounds. You can tune them up and down in pitch by up to two octaves – the equivalent of a range of 49 notes on a piano. You can also play them backwards, or look at the graph of a sound and adjust the volume of the whole or any part. Thus you can make your own drum sounds subtle, distinctive or (with a bit of effort) both!

At first you can only edit and replay the eight sounds that are digitally recorded on the other side of the program tape. The supplied samples include bass and snare drum sounds, electric and acoustic tom-toms, open and closed high hat cymbals, handclaps and a clave.

These raw recordings use the maximum dynamic range of the system, so they can be tuned and edited with very little deterioration in quality. You can then assemble the sounds into kits that can be used with the standard SpecDrum program, mixing in original sounds if you wish.

FREE SAMPLES

To get best results from the System Two you need Cheetah's sound sampler – a £45 gismo that lets you record your own sounds in the computer memory.

Much of the SpecDrum System Two software is devoted to sampling. The principle is the same as that for the Cheetah sound-sampler program, reviewed in CRASH last year, but System Two improves upon some of its best features and those of the RAM Music Machine software.

The main difficulty in recording good drum sounds at home is that the SpecDrum can only cope with very short noises; the longest sound it can handle is only about a sixth of a second. The System Two Sampler has the same restriction, and doesn't let you edit the desired part out of a longer recording, so it can take quite a few tries to record a sound without losing the start or the end. Another display option, VIEW, shows you a solid graph of the whole recording till you release the V key.

The restricted sample length means that you can fit the program, a kit of eight sounds, and the drum pattern or sample being edited into 48K. Unlike the sound sampler's own software, but like the RAM Music Machine and the first SpecDrum program, System Two ignores the extra memory on a Spectrum 128.

It takes about 20 seconds to load or save a sample on cassette, and two minutes to save a complete kit of eight drums. Microdrive filing is supported, and I had no trouble loading and saving samples on the Swift Disk using Sixword's microdrive emulator; files loaded and saved in a few seconds, regardless of size. The program is supplied as a headerless tape file, so it is not easy to transfer it to disk without a magic-button device like a Multiface.

WAVE EDITING

The System Two's wave editor displays the detailed graph of a sample, spread over 12 display pages, with one dot representing the level of each individual sample. A recording is made up of 3072 separate sampled levels. You can move about in steps of half a page very quickly, and can position a cursor at any point on the wave.

You can edit the sample the hard way, by moving each dot on the graph. If you just want to adjust the level of all or part of a sample you can draw a line or ENVELOPE. The volume is automatically adjusted, throughout the sample, to correspond to the shape of the line.

TUNE lets you shift the pitch of the sample up or down by a semitone, over a range of plus or minus two octaves.

Reducing the pitch of a wave makes it longer; the extra information is lost.

The ENVELOPE and TUNE options degrade the quality of the recording slightly, but they're still useful.

REVERSE turns the sample around so that it plays backwards. The CLIP option just cuts off troughs and peaks outside certain boundaries, generally causing distortion.

If you don't like the result of a change you can UNDO it to recover the previous sound. N and O play the 'new' and 'old' versions, so you can easily compare the sounds before and after editing.

LIMITATIONS

In the last couple of years much space in this column has been devoted to editing and converting the sounds supplied with the original SpecDrum, and Cheetah's follow-up cassette kits of prerecorded sounds.

The System Two lets you change the pitch of those sounds, but it will only let you adjust the volume of homemade samples and the eight sounds supplied with System Two.

Cheetah justifies this in the grounds that the kit sounds have already been balanced and attempts to change their volume may lead to extra noise or distortion.

THE VERDICT

The SpecDrum System Two works well and will be useful to keen SpecDrummers, but it is a shame that it has limitations that reduce the scope for experimentation (I hope to remove these in future CRASHes).

Still, it's a two-year old product, and the fact that it can be extended at all is a tribute to the original design.

If you already own the Cheetah sound sampler, the SpecDrum System Two is excellent value, and provides a much slicker link between the sampler and the SpecDrum than I have been able to serialise in these pages. But don't expect me to stop now, just when things are getting interesting . . .

NEXT MONTH: SUPPLEMENT AND TECH TAPE

TECH TIPS is finally joining Playing Tips and Adventure Trail in the big league – next month's Crash will feature a 16-page Tech Tips special packed with interesting reading, including new tips and comprehensive comparative reviews of most things good and technical.

There will also be full details of a Tech Tape, available direct from CRASH at a small charge. The Tech Tape is a compendium of useful and interesting utilities, and should be incredible value for money, whether you're a computer-user or a programmer.

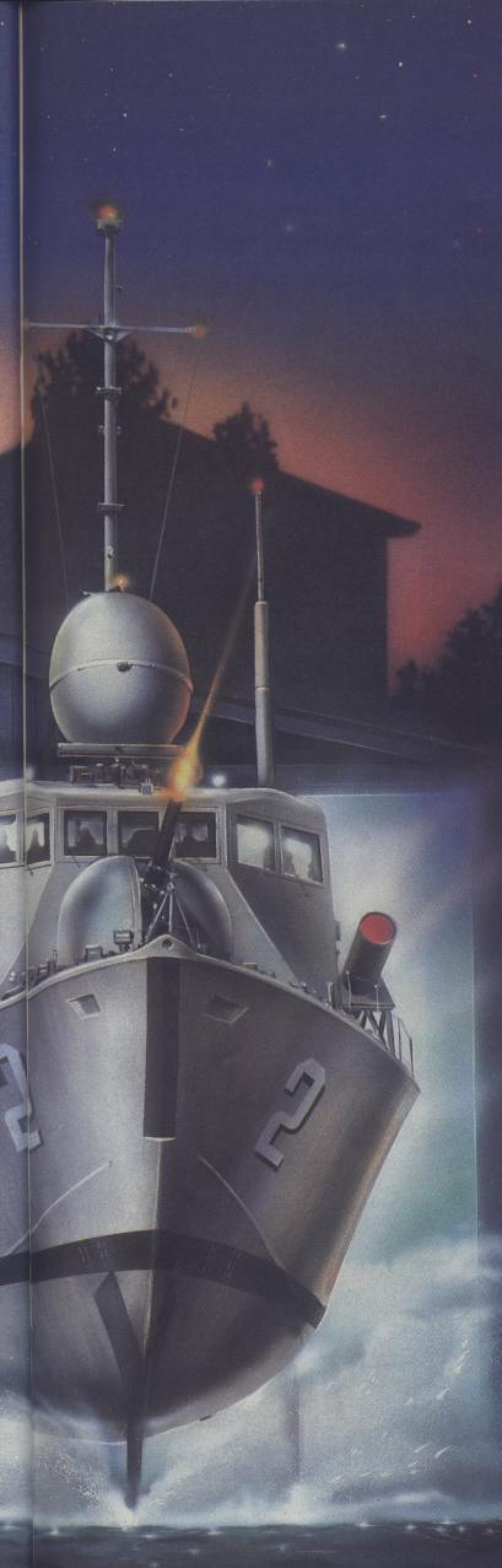
The tape includes a fast, concise turbo loader and protection routines, which you can use in your own cassette programs; a complete compiler which translates ZX BASIC into very fast machine code; a real-time sound processor for anyone with a Sampler or RAM Music Machine, plus new studio-recorded drum sounds; a sample editor; and sample-conversion routines. There's even a graphics game in there, to demonstrate how well the BASIC compiler works!

Issue 50 of CRASH goes on sale February 25.

In the meantime, if you'd like to pass on an original tip and win £30 worth of software, if you've got a (new) technical problem, or if you want me to review something, please write to:
Simon N Goodwin, Tech Tips, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.

I can't answer letters personally, even if you enclose an SAE, but will tackle previously unsolved tech teasers in Tech Tips.


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FLYING TONIGHT



► A L1011 Tristar flight simulator with 6 degrees of freedom motion.

▼ B737 No 2 flight simulator panel configuration.





► **Towards the future. A Boeing 737 flight simulator with Novoview SP3 visual system and WIDE display**

► BA's newest facility – B737 No 2 simulator. The machine is approved to F.A.A. Phase 2 standard.



Julian Rignall and Steve Jarratt visit British Airways' Flight Crew Training Centre and speak to Chris Barnes, Senior Principal Engineer (simulators) and John Silver, Public Affairs Manager (flight operations and technical) about the state-of-the-art flight simulators used at Heathrow, and the increasing importance of advanced technology in aeronautics.

BRITISH AIRWAYS

Amongst the mass of buildings on the southwest side of Heathrow Airport lies British Airways' Flight Crew Training Centre at Cranebank. Here, pilots and navigators are taken through their paces on one of 11 flight simulators currently housed there. There is also a Concorde simulator at Filton in Bristol.

All 11 simulators are on a constant 24 hour standby, and are used for between 16 to 22 hours a day. Pilots on type-conversion training or those being given their mandatory bi-annual proficiency check assure the simulators' high utilisation. The simulators ensure that their skills meet the high standard required by British Airways.

THE SIMULATOR

Julian and Steve looked at a Boeing 737-200 simulator, and were taken through take-off and landing procedures by Chris Barnes.

The main cockpit and display is housed in a large cabinet supported by a bed of six hydraulic rams. Access to the cockpit is via a small drawbridge, which is removed during the 'flight', to leave the simulator free standing.

The cockpit area is a perfect representation of that encountered on the actual plane, with the exception of a small area to the rear of the pilot and co-pilot's seats which contains equipment necessary to the running of the simulator and for the information of the training instructor overseeing the crew.

The term 'simulator' is complete in every sense of the word, since the hardware and software work in conjunction to create a totally convincing and physically realistic flying environment. Every facet of the aeroplane and its flight characteristics are reproduced to within an extensive series of stringent operating limits set by the CAA – the Civil Airlines Authority.

The actual impression of flight is achieved by the realistic image system and the three dimensional cockpit movement. The hydrostatic suspension allows six axes of movement and can pull ± 1.0 G in the vertical axis and ± 0.8 G in the lateral and longitudinal axes, effectively simulating acceleration and deceleration in all directions.

The two forward and two side views from the cockpit are provided by four monitors, whose image is projected into the window area by a beam splitter/collimating mirror system.

The Boeing 737 has a dusk/night time visual system which accurately provides all ground lights and airport buildings as reference for the pilot.

The high contrast/high resolution/fast update needed to create an authentic visual display makes ordinary TV screens redundant – the normal high persistence cathode ray tube creates glare and 'comet-tailing' from the individual points of light. To relieve this problem, each monitor employs a Beam Penetration display and uses a single electron gun to draw the whole image on the phosphor-coated screen.

Colour is determined by the 'depth' to which the Phosphor atoms are penetrated by the stream of electrons: the more penetration accorded a Phosphor atom, the higher the excitation level of its electrons, effectively altering the wavelength of the emitted light. All points of one colour are displayed, then the voltage of the gun and its focal length are altered and all the points of a differing colour are plotted and so on. The refresh rate of the screen is as high as 30 Hz – or once every 33 milliseconds – so the lapse between scans is totally undetectable.

With this system, resolution is limited only to the point size of the beam and the extent of the available X and Y co-ordinates of the electron gun.

The hardware employed in creating and updating the three-dimensional model of each airport is based around a Rediffusion SP1 system using a 16-Bit Texas Instruments 980B. The Boeing 737 visual system can generate displays of about 20 actual airports used on British Airways short-haul routes and the data required for each airport and its surroundings is stored on a 500K eight-inch disk, with each one taking up a mere 64K.

Although the image system plays an important role in creating a convincing flying environment, the bulk of the simulation is concerned with controlling the interaction between control inputs and the spatial characteristics of the aeroplane, its trim and the consequent feedback to the pilot via controls, instruments and the exterior view.

The main system boasts a Gould 32/8705 with a 32-Bit high speed floating point processor, with four Mb physical memory backed up by two internal 160 Mb Winchester hard drives and an external magnetic tape drive. A good idea of the capabilities of the hardware are seen when you consider that the bus band width is about 27Mb per second, which means that data is transferred at around 27,000K every second!

The computer constantly scans the whole operations deck, including every physical input. It must then decide what effect this has on the plane's overall trim, how the flight path has been altered, and finally how the plane's new spatial position relates to the view from the cockpit and the numerous displays and readouts available. To create the correct feedback through the controls, a separate processor is employed based around a Gould SEL 32/37 with Rediffusion microcode and high speed parallel multiplier. This applies the correct amount of pressure on the control column, rudder pedals and so on, depending upon the current trim of the plane (for instance, pulling back on the joystick is harder while in a dive, than in level flight).

Suffice to say, the cumulative effect of motion, visuals and control feedback provides a totally authentic experience of flight.

▼ Instruction Facility. Training captain controls exercise VDU screen whilst upper screen shows area maps.



TO THE FUTURE

The training centre is about to take delivery of a new Vax-based Boeing 747-200 combi series flight simulator with full daylight visuals, and a 747-400 series full flight and fixed base simulator later in the year. Both systems cost about £10M each (the avionics systems alone cost £2M), increasing the value of the entire equipment within the complex to around £130M.

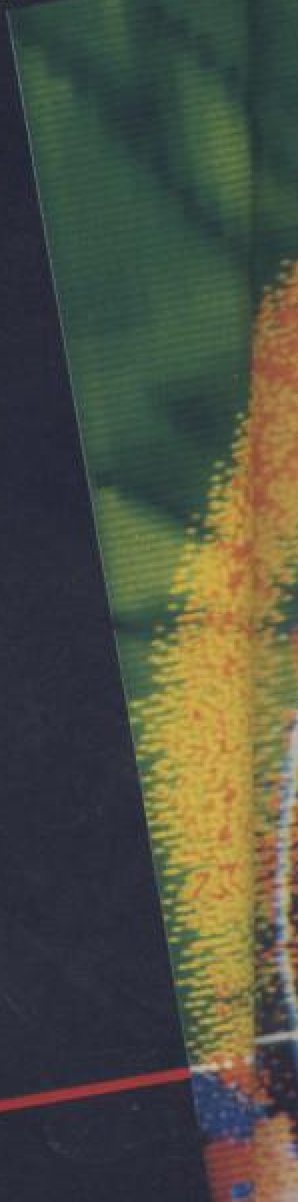
Chris Barnes sums up by voicing opinions on the way ahead, 'We only upgrade where we feel necessary. The simulators we use are the latest state-of-the-art but there is, of course, a requirement to keep up with technology. The growth area now is visuals: more processing power will be used on the image systems than anything else. We're getting digitally modelled 3D graphics in full daylight, with the ability to provide full ground based air traffic and different weather conditions. Improved sound systems are surfacing and new languages are being use to run the data. The future of simulators now depends a lot on the military, who can now create a complete combat experience, from mid-air refuelling to dogfights and bombing runs without ever leaving the ground'.

Indeed, simulators have reached such a peak of realism that BA has approval for zero flight-time for its Boeing 737 and 757 simulators – pilots may soon become fully qualified without flying the actual aircraft.

As computer technology advances, we may even see pilotless airliners, where a skeleton crew of engineers merely oversee the running of the aeroplane while computers do all the flying. Science fiction, it seems, is very quickly becoming science fact.

SOMETHING HORRIFYING AND INE

SCHWARZENEGGER
PREDAT



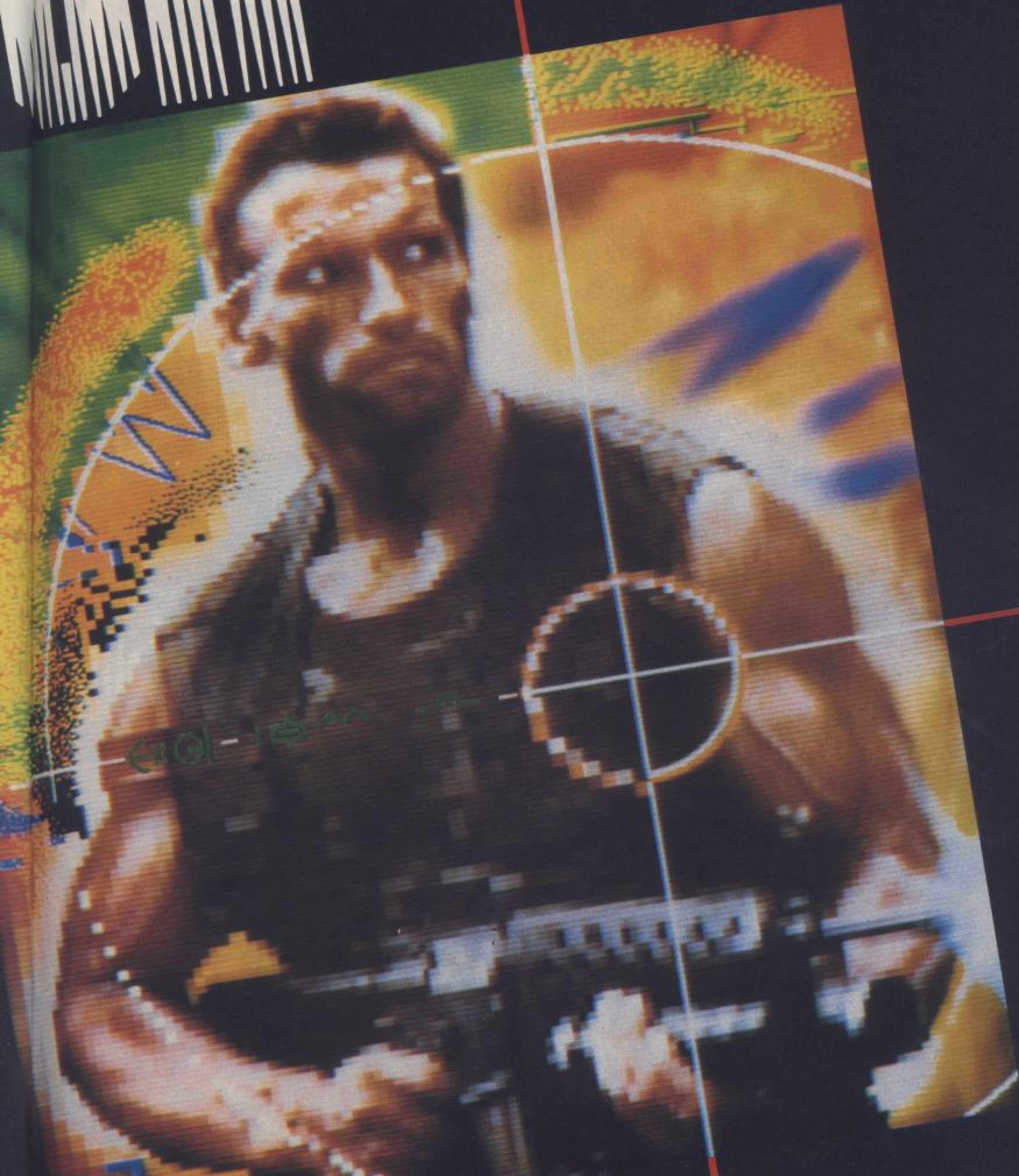
Nothing like it has ever been on Earth before.
It came for the thrill of the hunt.
It picked the wrong person to hunt. YOU!

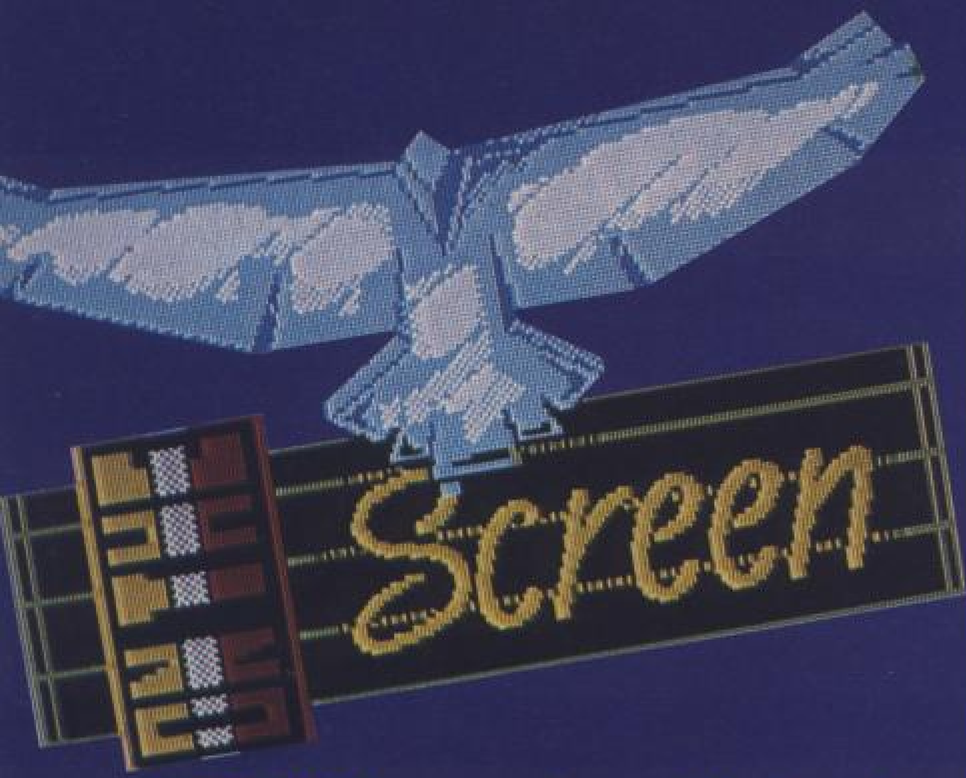
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ACTIVISION

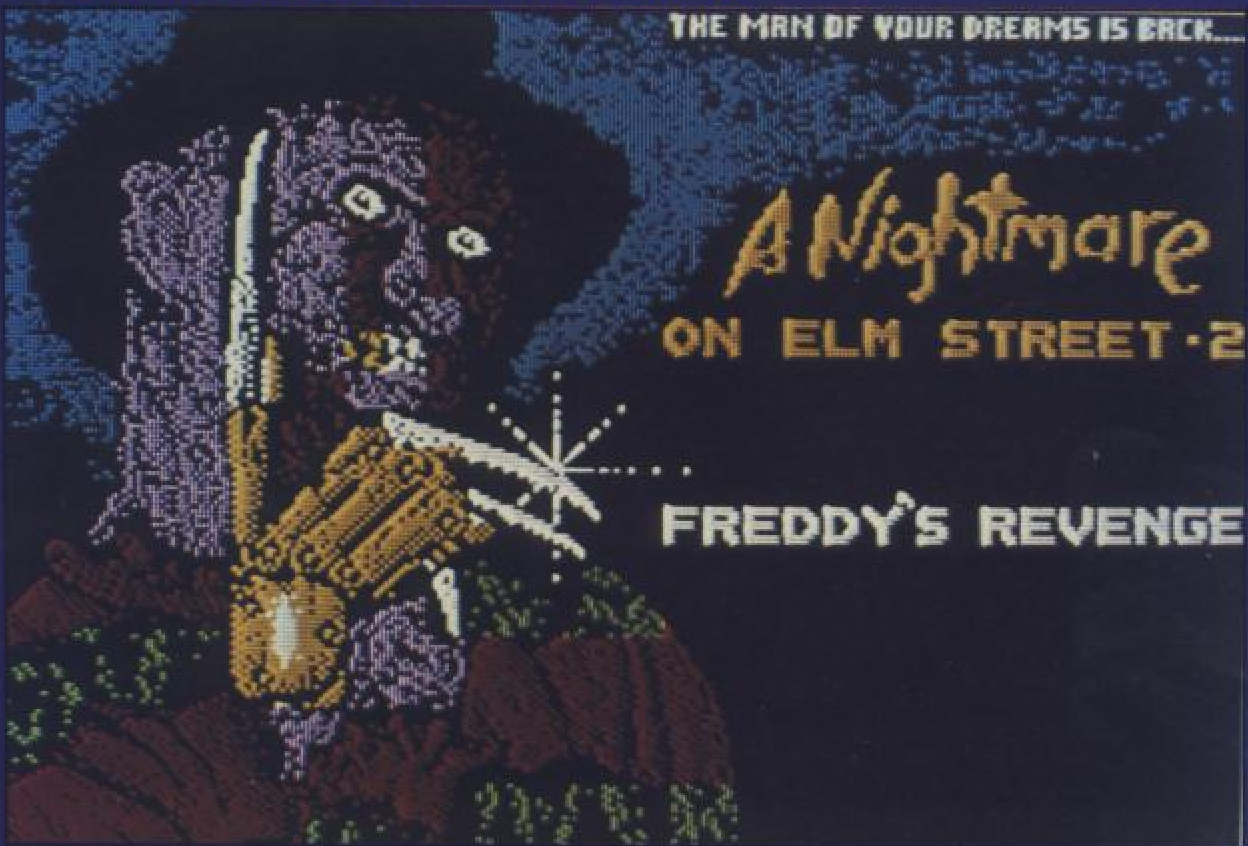
Game concept, design and graphics by System 3.







MIKE DUNN faces murder and Madonna in a search through your Spectrum SCREEN$



▲ This one had all the surviving LM staff crowding round my Spectrum and lecturing me about the good old days – thanks to long-established On The Screen contributor Matthew Arnold, from Newport Pagnell in Buckinghamshire

◄ A nightmare in the CRASH office: this screen depicting no-one's favourite film murderer Freddy Krueger arrives from Alan Grier of Saltcoats in Ayrshire. Colour is used to powerful effect in Alan's picture, based on the character from the *Nightmare On Elm St* series of movies.

▼ It's those Communards in full, again from Matthew Arnold





◄ More music from M Pearson: the Pet Shop Boys make it onto the Spectrum screen. What have we done to deserve them?



▲ The sleeve artwork of megastar Madonna's *True Blue* album was adapted by M Pearson, from Wombourne in the West Midlands, with nice shading and an effective blue monochrome. Please address all Mary Whitehouse-type letters about Madonna and the immorality of young people these days to Paul 'let's see how many pictures of Madonna I can fit around my Apricot' Sumner . . .



▲ Varoom! This Lamborghini Contach is just the sort of thing I need to match my Filofax – if I ever get paid for On The Screen. Martin Stevenson's excellent detail makes up for the lack of colour.



▲ Matthew Arnold takes to the screen again with this shot from his impressive demo – a nice, colourful, and amusing new angle on Mastertronic's *Feud*, with pretty cartoon characters

The standard of SCREEN$ is rising all the time, and it gets ever harder to select the best ones, but I'm not complaining (for a change!).

Send yours to MIKE D, ON THE SCREEN, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*, and remember that if your work is printed you'll get a full-colour framed 'n' mounted screen dump of the masterpiece, courtesy of Rainbird. (Sorry to all those who've been waiting for their screen dumps – I'm on the case.)





▲ Skulls and moons and lots and lots of blue: an odd screen from Martin Stevenson of Worsley near Manchester, but no-one can deny its originality. We don't get many top-hatted skulls here at this time of year . . .



BRENDON KAVANAGH

CONVENTION COMING SOON

THE Third British Play By Mail convention will be held on February 20 at the Porchester Centre in London. It will include game launches, competitions, live role-playing demonstrations, SF/fantasy stalls, a swap shop (bring any complete board games, *D & D* pieces, ORIGINAL software etc to sell or swap), lectures, a bar and myself. As ever, the last two features will be found quite close together . . .

Most major PBM companies will be attending the convention, and there are always a fair few newcomers there.

The convention is always worth visiting, with many bargains to be grabbed and players to meet. It's a good idea to wear a badge to say who you are in whatever game you play.

HI, STANDARD

One of the major displays at the convention will probably be the launch of **Standard Games**'s first PBM game (the company is well known for its successful board games). David Norton of Standard Games says a PBM version of *Dark Blades* is imminent, and though Standard Games's designers haven't yet perfected the version to be marketed, Norton hopes the display at the convention will give a good idea of *Dark Blades*.

Dark Blades is a fantasy game for up to 100 players where the players are split first into races and then character types. There are two types of race and two types of character; in both cases the choice is the player's.

Each player is set several quests to complete before going for the big one – a quest to find a mystical object. The first player to complete all the quests and to find the object wins the game. Players interact as the game progresses – there'll be more details next issue, I hope.

MEGALOMANIA CURED?

Rumour has it that problems with the software governing **Phoenix Games**'s *Megalomania*, one of the most enjoyable games of 1987, have been overcome (famous last words!) and that Game Three is soon to be launched.

Meanwhile, the man responsible for the *Megalomania* idea, Andrew Dodd, has another game up his sleeve – to be run separately from the Phoenix house. It's called ***The Order Of Chaos*** and Dodd's idea is a novel one.

You, the player, are a World Shaper. Bible-readers will know Genesis, and that's basically the book of the game. Against all sorts of demonic opposition and irritation you must shape the River Of Life to 'create a suitable environment for Civilisation'. It's a cracking idea (interestingly paralleled by Ocean's new Atari ST/Amiga game *Eco*), so more details after the official launch.

CHEAP INTERPLANETARY WARFARE

Harrow Postal Games (moderator of *The Weapon*) has recently launched a new game, ***The Omega Victor***. This is another game of interstellar (well, interplanetary according to the rulebook) diplomacy and wargaming. The player's goal is simply survival: you are one of 20 planetary rulers wishing to control all the planets of the Omega cluster. In the beginning you have a homeworld, a few flagships and some starfighters. And away you go.

The company claims *The Omega Victor* is simple but fun to play, and it looks interesting though maybe not very different from a handful of other games. It's cheap, too – only 50p per turn for British players. Harrow Postal Games's manager, Jim Gibson, will attend the convention with more information.

The Porchester Centre is just up the road from Royal Oak underground station (near Paddington on the Metropolitan line).

Doors at the Third British Play By Mail Convention open at 10.30am and will close at about 5.00pm.

Tickets cost £2 at the door or £1.50 if bought in advance from Mike McGarry, *2 David Court, 200 Lansdowne Road, London N17 9XW*.



NEW GAMES

NOVA PRODUCTIONS, which runs *Conquest*, is promising two new games for the summer. ***Ancient Empires*** and ***Conquest Of The Stars*** are being imported from the USA by Nova Productions, which has made a deal for the UK rights with the games' American owners, Schubel And Son Inc.

Ancient Empires is an established American game for 40 players set on a mythical planet. Players rule empires which, while producing some goods, are still dependent upon each other for survival. Trade is necessary, but war and blockades are not uncommon. The game seems to have some interesting military, naval and economic features, so I await the rulebook with bated breath.

Conquest Of The Stars is, as Nova honestly admits, 'the usual type of space PBM game'. 60 players battle it out over the same galaxy with a multitude of spacecraft and military units fighting over the ever-popular ultimate fuel source etc etc. There's a promise of alien life forms as well. If *Conquest Of The Stars* is priced low it could be in fierce competition with other new budget games, such as *Eclipse* and *The Omega Victor*.

There's a new idea from **Blitzkrieg Games** – a comic-book superhero PBM game, ***Destructor***. The multicoloured rulebook for this imaginative new hand-moderated launch details pages and pages of superpowers, body parts, terrain types and so on.

And for sports fanatics there's a new **American-football** PBM game which looks like a good simulation, though it's not as cheap as some other amateur games. Write to **SEP Games**, *PO Box 12, Eccles, Manchester M30 7BP*.

PBM FANZINE FILE

AMATEUR SPORT games are the subject of ***Top Of The Pile***, an easy-to-read fanzine offering a fair few positions in football and motor-racing games, among others. It's on its third issue; for a copy send an SAE to Dave Brennan, *4 The Poplars, Biddick, Washington, Tyne And Wear NE38 7DR* – and ask Dave how much it costs to join, because he didn't tell me!

Also on its third issue, ***PBM Scroll*** is 16 pages in a new A5 format. The price hike to £1 is a bit too much, but it's worth a look – contact John Woods, *91 Wandle Road, Morden, Surrey SM4 6AD*.

VOTE FOR THE CHARTS

HOW TO VOTE FOR YOUR FAVOURITE GAMES: give each of your top five games for the HOTLINE, ADVENTURE and STRATEGY charts a mark out of ten – the better the game, the higher the mark.

ADVENTURE CHART

TITLE **MARK OUT OF TEN**

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3 ....
4 ....
5 ....

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.... Postcode ....

T-shirt size ☐
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5 ....

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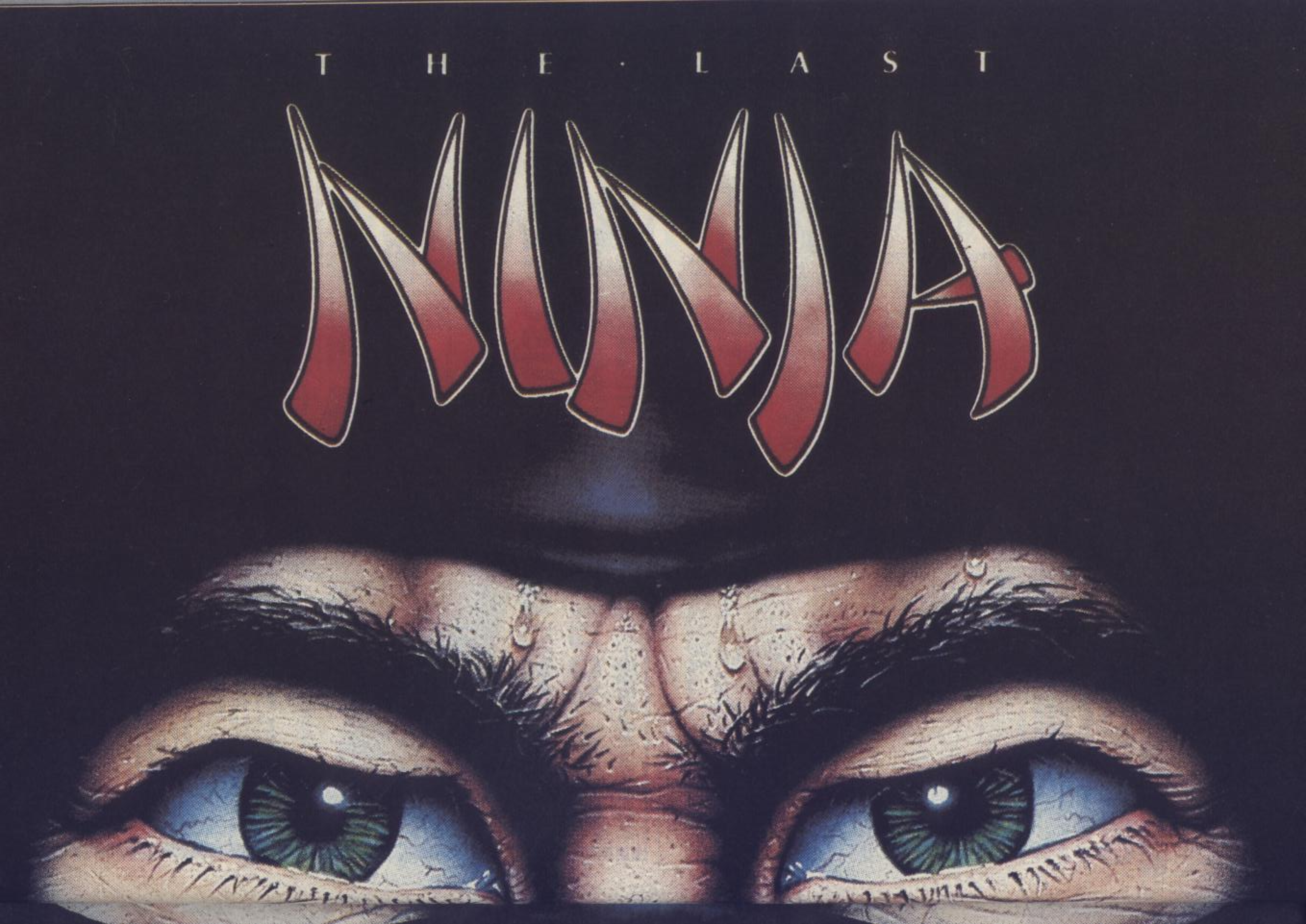
TITLE **MARK OUT OF TEN**

1 ....
2 ....
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5 ....

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T-shirt size ☐
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CRASH HISTORY BINDERS

Lloyd Mangram's four-part CRASH History, which continues in this issue, will add up to 96 pages: 48 CRASH covers and 48 pages of text. A special binder will be available in December to keep the CRASH History permanently together.

The binder is designed to also accomodate the complete CRASH indexes to reviews, tips and features, which will be published in the Christmas Special.

And each binder will come with reprints of all Lloyd Mangram's CRASH Lookbacks (excluding 1987, because that's in the Christmas Special anyway) and some special articles and archival material on the history of the Spectrum. With the CRASH History it will form a unique CRASH book of over 120 pages.

You can order the binder now, but please be prepared to wait longer than the usual 28 days!

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***FOUR** styles! Three of them feature Oli Frey's most famous CRASH paintings in full colour and one T-shirt depicts a monster from your worst nightmares – King Grub. Wear it if you can stand the slime.*

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The T-shirts are 50% cotton and 50% polyester, so everyone's happy, and they're all available in two dramatically different sizes: medium (M on the form) and Grubbish, ie extra extra large (XXL).

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We could go on about the handsome tooling, the embossed title page and the rare art prints which will make this a collector's edition, but it'd all be fibbing. The CRASH binder is, however, very useful for making shelves collapse when overloaded with 164-page editions of the magazine!

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BACK NUMBERS

Don't miss out!

1984

3 APR Sinclair talks to CRASH • Stack Light Rifle • Run It Again: *Missile Command* games • CRASHtionnaire results • the earliest surviving back number!!
4 MAY *The Quill* analysed • the fabled ZX Microdrive appears • Run It Again: *Pengo* games • graphics utilities • Living Guide: boardgames, simulations, strategy, adventure • the second-earliest surviving back number!! *(that's enough early back numbers – Ed)*

1985

17 JUN Denton Designs • Sinclair Story 3 • Maps: *Knight Lore, Underwurlde* • Leonardo Graphics • Datel sound sampler • Artist: David Thorpe
18 JUL *Gremlin Graphics profile • Artist: Bob Wakelin • Map: Gyron Atrium*
19 AUG CRL profile • Oliposter • roundup of BASIC compilers • Artist: Rich Shenfield • Maps: *Dynamite Dan, Shadowfire*
20 SEP Electronic Pencil Company profile • Maps: *Alien 8, Dun Darach*
21 OCT Holografix profile • Holograms • Map: *Nodes Of Yesod* • Platinum Productions profile
22 NOV Fanzine File • Microdrive tips • Artist: Susan Rowe • Fantasy Gamebooks
23 DEC Melbourne House • Computer graphics • Artist: Dave Beeson
24 XMAS 1985/6 Artist: Oliver Frey • Gargoyle Games profile • Lloyd's Lookback • Hewson profile

1986

25 FEB Durell profile • Microsphere • FORTH and extensions to ZX BASIC
26 MAR St Bride's profile • Spectrum 128 • Micronet 800 • Multiface 1
27 APR Playing Tips supplement • Mel Croucher • Imagine profile • PBM convention
28 MAY Fanzines • Martech profile • Composite Video Interface • SpecDrum
29 JUN First PBM Mailbox • Homegrown software • Realtime profile • Maps: *Cylu, Sir Fred, Saboteur, Tantalus*
30 JUL Birth of a game • Laser Genius • Maps: *Tantalus, Movie*
31 AUG Software Projects • Word processing • Maps: *Pentagram, Heavy On The Magick*
32 SEP Programmer: Dave Perry • *GAC* • Maps: *Core, Ghosts 'n' Goblins, Bobby Bearing* • Echo Synthesizer
33 OCT Programmers: Jon Ritman, Costa Panayi • Maps: *Dan Dare, Cauldron II* • SpecDrumming
34 NOV Programmer: Don Priestley • Genesis Update • Maps: *Dynamite Dan II, Equinox, Universal Hero* • Music Machine
35 DEC Designer: Dan Malone • Computer Advertising • Maps: *Glider Rider, Thrust, Lightforce* • MIDI
36 XMAS 1986/87 Lloyd's Lookback • Spectrum Music • Maps: *Scooby Doo, Heartland, Druid*

1987

37 FEB John Richardson: Jetman • CRASH Reviewers revealed • *Match Day* Challenge • Maps: *Fairlight II, Firelord, Avenger, Dandy*
38 MAR Fanzines • Designer: Bernie Drummond • Maps: *Cobra, Impossaball, Uridium* • MIDI
39 APR Arcades update • The Z88 • Programmer: Steve Taylor • Maps: *Nosferatu, Double Take, Future Knight, Feud*
40 MAY Terminal Man returns • Playing Tips Supplement • Maps: *Short Circuit, Antiriad, Con-Quest, Into The Eagle's Nest, Sceptre Of Bagdad, Dragon's Lair II, Thrust II, Fat Worm Blows A Sparky, Tarzan, Aliens*
41 JUN Programmer: Mike Singleton • Industry today • Adventure Trail Supplement • Maps: *Saboteur II, Head Over Heels* • Multitrackers • 128 bugs
42 JUL 16-page *OINK!* pull-out • *Living Daylights* film FX • Programmer: Pete Cooke • Maps: *Auf Wiedersehen Monty, Hydrofool, Rasterscan*
43 AUG The +3 arrives • Run It Again runs the *Gauntlet* clones • Big trouble at *The Bug* • CRASHtionnaire results • CRL's *3D Gamemaker* • Maps: *Enduro Racer, Flash Gordon*
44 SEP Programmer: David Aubrey-Jones on *Mercenary* • The Sega Master System • Is homegrown software healthy? • Tech Tips: that Swift Disc • Forum: *Barbarian* backlash continues • The CRASH Challenge • Maps: *Vampire, The Curse Of Sherwood* • tips galore for *Killed Until Dead*
45 OCT Run It Again: the kick-'em-ups • The CRASH History Part One • In the arcades • The budget BOOOOOOM • How stars are born: selling your games • On The Screen logo winners • Maps: *Game Over, Wonder Boy*

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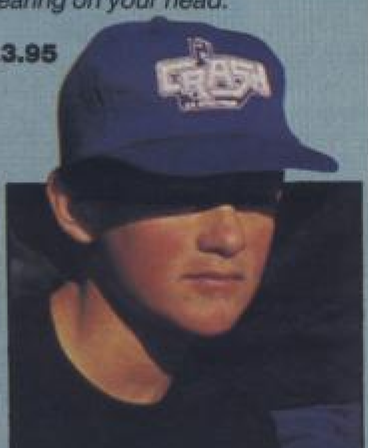
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the Crash CHARTS



TOP GAMES FEBRUARY

The three charts compiled from the votes of CRASH readers is the most realistic chart for gauging the popularity of Spectrum games – it is the games that are being played that get the votes, not the games that are in the shops this week or month.

And the votes are important. It's up to you to let us know what you feel, so fill in the voting forms which live on the results pages and in FRONTLINE to make your voice heard.

If you don't want to carve up your issue of CRASH, we understand. Use a photocopy if you like, or copy the details from the voting forms onto a postcard, or the back of a sealed envelope, and send that to us instead.

Apart from the satisfaction of registering your vote, there's always the chance of winning a prize. Each month we draw 15 winners from all the voting forms received – five for the HOTLINE, five for the ADVENTURE and five for the STRATEGY chart.

A top prize of £40 worth of software (your choice, not ours) and a CRASH T-shirt is awarded to the first slip drawn from the HOTLINE votes, and another £40 of goodies and a shirt goes to the ADVENTURE and £20 of goodies and a shirt goes to the STRATEGY

Four runners up from each ballot box collect a CRASH T-shirt and a CRASH Hat. So get those votes in to the **CRASH HOTLINE CHART**, **CRASH ADVENTURE CHART** and **CRASH STRATEGY CHART**: ***PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.***

Hewson holds the top two spots and still at Number Two is Zynaps; Exolon **stops last month's Number One** Enduro Racer **in its dirty tracks, jumping up from Number Five. Elsewhere** Barbarian **drops down to Number 15 and another beat-'em-up,** Renegade, **looks threatening as it goes up five places to Number Five. At the other end of the chart, oldies** Bombjack **and** Quazatron **make a reappearance with** The Sentinel.

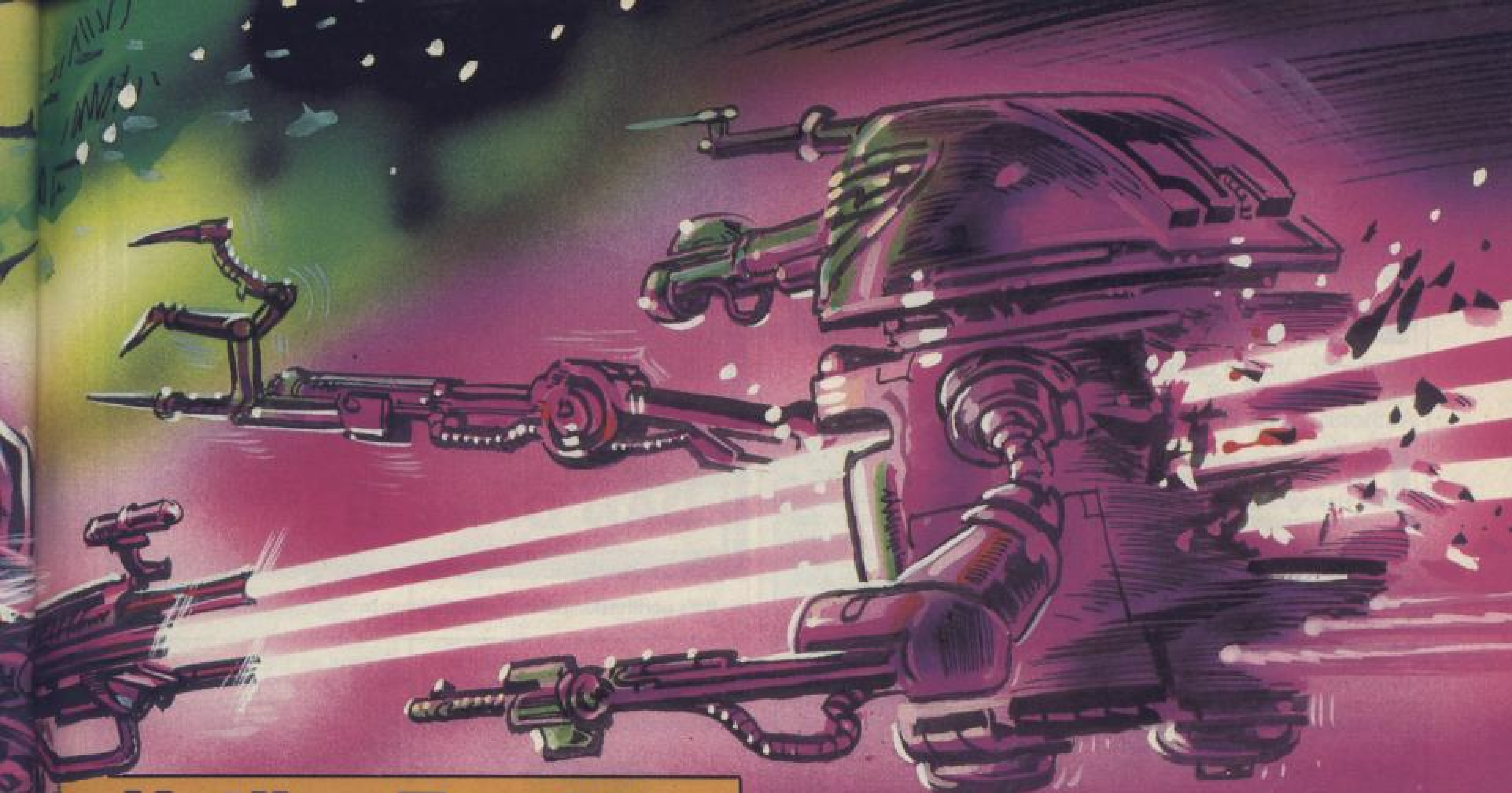
Even as you read this, the lucky winner of this month's £40 worth of software and CRASH T-shirt will be opening his brown paper package – Evan Wolliston of London has asked for such delights as** Starglider, Driller **and** 720°. **Also out of the hat came **David Haffner** ***from Redditch in Worcestershire,*** **Barry Smith** ***from Ipswich,*** **Dewi Aled Jones** ***(a name to leave our sentimental mothers dewi-eyed) from Gwynedd, and*** **Peter Hutchinson** ***from Heben Bridge in West Yorkshire.***

Perhaps we should rename this the Static Chart. Yet again the well-known Vulcan **holds the hardly-jousted-for-at-all Number One spot, and most games move only a few places this month, with** Tobruk **and** Their Finest Hour **re-entering the chart . . . yet again.**

Top prize goes to Dangermouse and his sidekick **Simon Penfold** ***from Blackwood in Gwent. Strange to see Simon voting for*** Vulcan ***and also asking for it as a prize . . . Runners-up come from all corners of the isles; they're*** **Tiernan McGuigan** ***from County Tyrone in Northern Ireland,*** **Mike Cooney** ***from Roscommon in Eire,*** **Scott Bruce** ***from the fair town of Cheltenham in Gloucestershire, and*** **Andrew Murray** ***from West Wickham in Kent.***

Strategy Top 10

1 (1)	VULCAN	CCS
2 (3)	ARNHEM	CCS
3 (4)	LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	BEYOND
4 (2)	DESERT RATS	CCS
5 (5)	REBELSTAR RAIDERS	FIREBIRD
6 (7)	DOOMDARK'S REVENGE	BEYOND
7 (9)	BATTLE OF BRITAIN	PSS
8 (6)	THEATRE EUROPE	PSS
9 (-)	TOBRUK	PSS
10 (-)	THEIR FINEST HOUR	CENTURY HUTCHINSON



Hotline Top 20

1 (5)	EXOLON	HEWSON
2 (2)	ZYNAPS	HEWSON
3 (3)	GAUNTLET	US GOLD
4 (1)	ENDURO RACER	ACTIVISION
5 (10)	RENEGADE	IMAGINE
6 (4)	HEAD OVER HEELS	OCEAN
7 (8)	MATCH DAY	OCEAN
8 (12)	BUBBLE BOBBLE	FIREBIRD
9 (14)	STARGLIDER	RAINBIRD
10 (11)	MERCENARY	NOVAGEN
11 (15)	COBRA	OCEAN
12 (9)	ELITE	FIREBIRD
13 (13)	LEADERBOARD	US GOLD
14 (17)	PAPERBOY	ELITE
15 (6)	BARBARIAN	PALACE
16 (16)	BATMAN	OCEAN
17 (7)	URIDIUM	HEWSON
18 (-)	BOMBJACK	ELITE
19 (-)	QUAZATRON	HEWSON
20 (-)	THE SENTINEL	FIREBIRD

Did anyone really expect Melbourne House's The Hobbit **to be off Number One for more than a month? Still, at least it gives the other games in the chart some hope! And two adventures from Melbourne House's budget sister M.A.D.,** Stormbringer **and** Spellbound**, hold their positions above the Beyond titles** Lords Of Midnight **and** Doomdark's Revenge.

Great Barr in Birmingham brings great players and this month's Adventure Chart winner, A Goode, is a good one. His £40 worth of software includes such mind-stretchers as *Driller* ***and*** *Colossus 4 Chess*. ***As far as runners-up go (which is quite far with the wind behind them), there's Timothy Stone from Winchome in Gloucestershire; Darren Gourley from Newtownabbey, County Antrim, in Northern Ireland; Mr P Tebbutt from Peterborough; and, last and biggest of all, Jonathan Lakin from Middlewich in Cheshire.***

Adventure Top 20

1 (3)	THE HOBBIT	MELBOURNE HOUSE
2 (2)	SPELLBOUND	M.A.D.
3 (1)	STORMBRINGER	M.A.D.
4 (5)	LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	BEYOND
5 (4)	DOOMDARK'S REVENGE	BEYOND
6 (10)	THE BOGGIT	CRL
7 (7)	KNIGHT TYME	M.A.D.
8 (9)	LORD OF THE RINGS	MELBOURNE HOUSE
9 (6)	HEAVY ON THE MAGICK	GARGOYLE GAMES
10 (12)	THE BIG SLEAZE	PIRANHA
11 (11)	RED MOON	LEVEL 9
12 (14)	GREMLINS	ADVENTURE INTERNATIONAL
13 (-)	DUN DARACH	GARGOYLE GAMES
14 (20)	FAIRLIGHT 2	THE EDGE
15 (16)	THE PAWN	RAINBIRD
16 (-)	SHADOWFIRE	BEYOND
17 (▶)	CUSTERDS QUEST	THE POWER HOUSE
18 (▶)	EMERALD ISLE	LEVEL 9
19 (▶)	HACKER	ACTIVISION
20 (13)	DRACULA	CRL

DAN DARE II

Producer: **Virgin Games**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **Andy Green**

Dan Dare's nemesis, the Mekon, has returned. Having escaped Dan's earlier attempts to defeat him, the runaway Treen has been slaving away in his lab to produce a squad of SuperTreens who are at present contained within Plexiglass life-support bubbles in the Mekon's battleship.

Armed with only a blaster, Dan enters the vessel astride his jetbike and seeks to find these creations and destroy them. As soon as Dan blasts the first, however, a self-destruct sequence begins. The time remaining until the resultant destruction of the battleship is shown at the bottom of the screen.

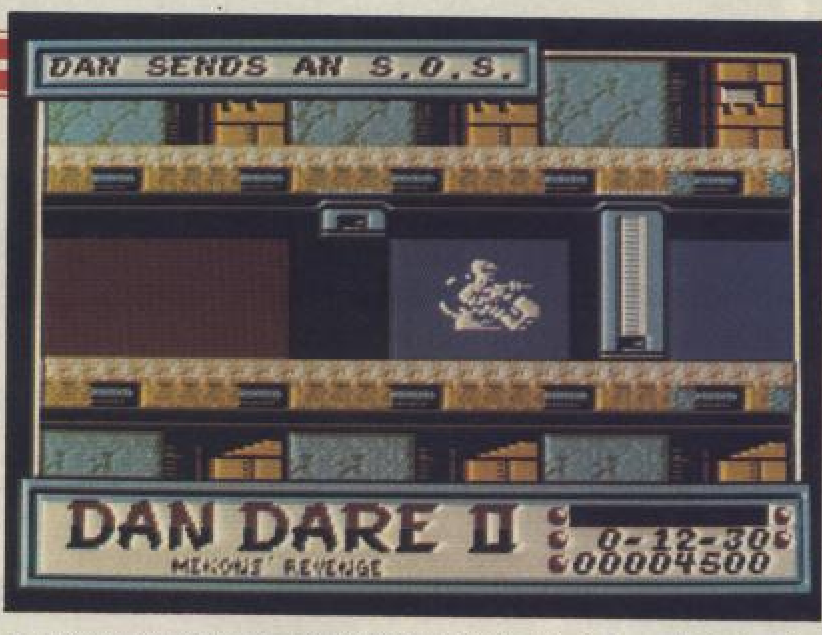
To escape a fiery death, Dan destroys all the SuperTreens on the current level – only then do the double blast doors between levels open to allow progress through the ship.

The SuperTreens and the

MIKE

" Dan Dare II **isn't really an improvement over the original. If anything, the graphics are worse: the colour is still pretty bright, but the Mekon seems to have lost his greenness (maybe he's recovered). It doesn't actually lack playability or addiction, although the innovation of the predecessor is lost in this latest incarnation. If you have** Dan Dare, **I would think hard before rushing out to buy the sequel.** "

64%



► **If it's worth making once, it's worth Mekon twice: Virgin Games's** ***Dan Dare II***

NATHAN

" Dan Dare II **is one of those games that only sees the light of day because the original was a hit. Fortunately there's enough variation in the gameplay to warrant its purchase, such as the option to play either character and the inclusion of some new hazards – being sucked into the ventilation system and so on. The action is a little more frenetic, and the graphics are of a similar standard to its predecessor. Unoriginal, but still enjoyable.** "

77%

NICK

" **This latest offering from Virgin is very similar in presentation and graphics to the first. There is, however, a new starting sequence with a well-animated space ship zooming through the sky, and you have the choice of playing Dan Dare or the Mekon. The screens themselves are very detailed and the game moves so quickly it's difficult to keep a track on the action. There are tubes that you can be sucked down and massive crushers to avoid so, there's no time to stop for a chat!** Dan Dare II **is a really neat follow up to a classic game – just the sort of thing you need to start the new year off with a swing!** "

81%

PSYCHO SOLDIER

Producer: **Imagine**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **Source Ltd**

You can't keep a good goddess down – in this sequel to Imagine's *Athena* (75% Overall in Issue 45) the voluptuous Athena is once again battling through a dangerous six-level world, rescuing humanity from a race of demons.

The 30 screens of each level are inhabited by these lethal beasts begging for a blast from Athena's laser or her bombs. She gathers points by destroying them, and the power of both laser and bombs can be increased by gathering icons which Athena reveals by destroying rock formations.

But some of these rocky blockages hide icons that can quickly drain Athena's energy – even the humble mushroom has its malevolent magic . . .

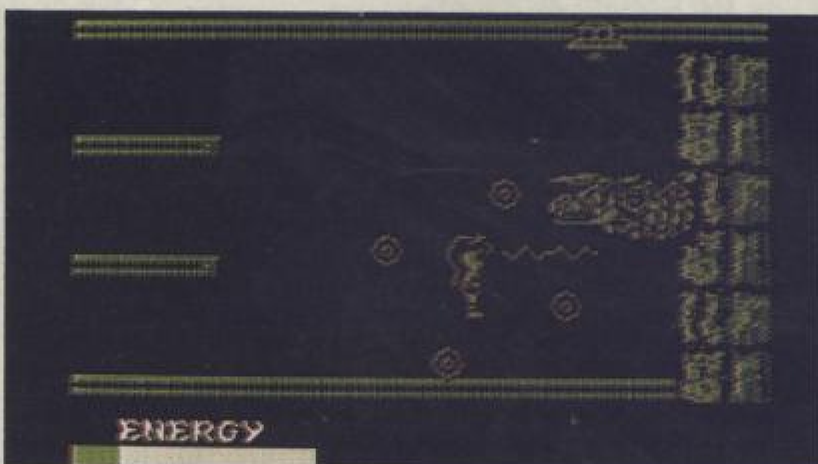
The dashing damsel must leap and jump from platform to platform, thinking quickly when anything blocks her way – if she just stands still she'll be outrun by the constantly scrolling landscape and crushed against an obstruction. This goddess isn't immortal, though she can acquire temporary indestructibility by shooting the globe which hatches from the inside of an egg.

And Athena must destroy the

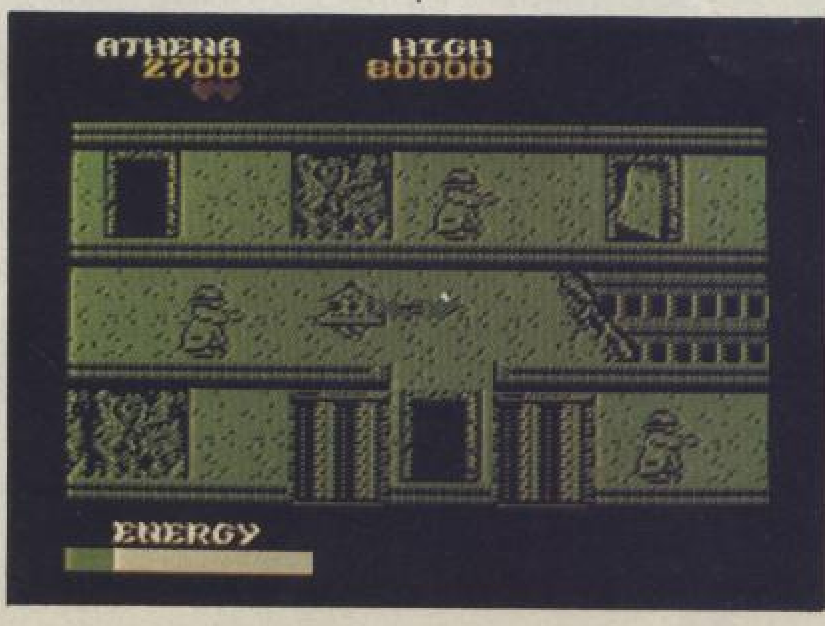
BYM

" **Why is Athena being chased by the Keystone Cops? Perhaps she's being hunted down for impersonating Sindy Doll. Whatever the crime, the slow scrolling screens aren't letting her run fast enough to escape the deadly touch of her cute pursuers. But once you've mastered the strange controls** Athena **is fun.** "

75%



► **It's Athena again – she's back, she's bad and she's** ***Psycho Soldier***



PAUL

" Athena **was great fun but** Psycho Soldier **is nowhere near the mark. The graphics are unimaginative, the sound is grinding, and playability suffers from the eponymous star's slow reactions.** Psycho Soldier **also needs much more variation: the first level is a terrible bore, requiring very little thought.** "

69%

spacefleet personnel are also involved in their own feud, and Dan can become caught in the crossfire. His vitality is reduced every time he's shot, and if his vitality reading goes down to zero, one of his six lives are lost.

There are four levels to be completed, and if Dan reaches the last, he finds a pod which is used to initiate his escape. *Dan Dare II* offers the option to play the role of either Dan or the Mekon, in which case the player must find, activate and eject the SuperTreens' life support boxes before the ship explodes.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: plenty of colour – but distributed without thought
Sound: pretty reasonable
Options: control of either Dan or the Mekon
General rating: mixed opinions, but generally considered to be a decent successor, if not exactly up to the standard of *Dan Dare*

Presentation	69%
Graphics	71%
Playability	57%
Addictive qualities	63%
OVERALL	**74%**

building at the end of each level to move to the next – to face another monstrous army.

NICK

" *Psycho Soldier* **has all the fun and frolics of** *Athena*, **though it's a bit too similar. The graphics aren't as good as the original's, the colour is dismal and the number of bombs whizzing around your head can be confusing; but challenging gameplay and well-defined characters make** *Psycho Soldier* **a worthwhile follow-up to a brilliant game.** "

83%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: intricately detailed and smoothly animated; but the colour is terrible
Sound: tune and spot effects
General rating: a playable but lacklustre follow-up to the successful *Athena*

Presentation	82%
Graphics	76%
Playability	77%
Addictive qualities	73%
OVERALL	**76%**

GALACTIC GAMES

Producer: **Activision**
Retail price: **£9.99**

Birmingham has lost its bid again, so on a planet far away from their original home the Olympic Games take a galactic turn.

Competitors face five awesome events: the 100-metre slither, space hockey, psychic judo, head-throwing and the metamorph marathon.

In the 100-metre slither, two racing worms get set to speedily slide along the track, bunching their bodies in caterpillar motion.

NICK

" **This is a cute little game with bright characters and some taxing events; some are drawn out for too long but you'll eventually be hooked. The graphics are well-defined and the shading is excellent in some events.** *Galactic Games* **is a fun buy for fans of the old** *Daley Thompson's Decathlon* **days.** "

54%

Pressing keys in the right rhythm keeps the intrepid invertebrates inching ahead, and to speed things up and beat the 70-second time limit they can go into 'super slither'. But too much rubbing on the ground creates a fierce friction, so flame-retardant slime must be deployed.

PAUL

" **The originality of sports like head-throwing is one of the strong points of** *Galactic Games*, **and the bother of multiloading makes them no less addictive or fun. All the galactic games are visually attractive, and most are very playable. And though none stands out, the range is wide, including very hard head-to-head contests, fast, simple action and slow methodical events.** "

76%



► Psychic judo stretches the mind in Activision's *Galactic Games*

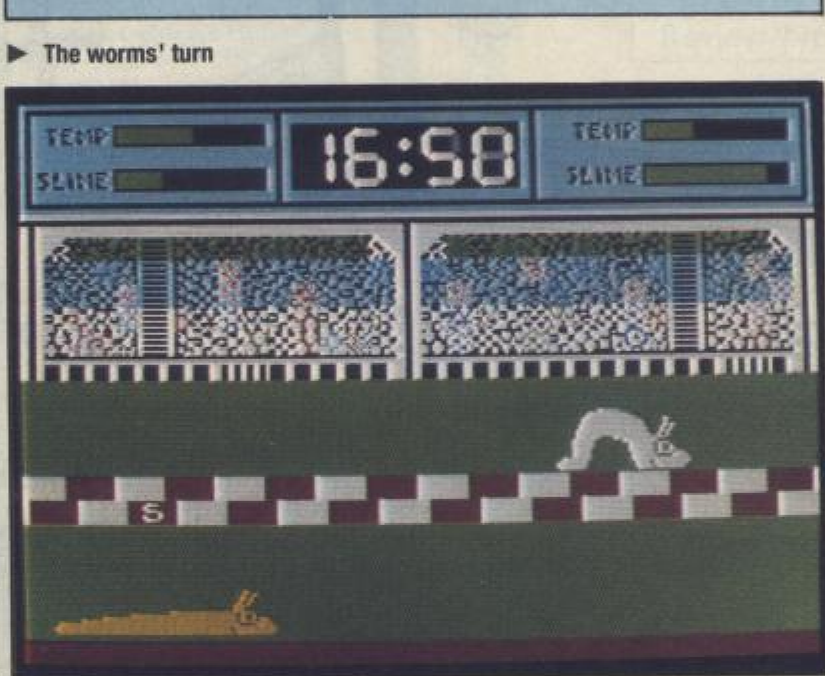
Once the worms have slimed their thing, space hockey starts, and two spheres battle over a living puck in four contests each a minute long.

BYM

" **Never before has such humour bounced around the Spectrum – or such aggravation. The graphics are bold, colourful and clear, but the sound is minimal (so I wonder why every event has its own loader – I'm sure two, at least, could share the same ROM). There's no way to bypass an event you don't like, and because all the rules are alien the controls could take some getting used to here on Earth. Still, it's a mixture of good clean fun and frustration, without the ultracompetitiveness of so many games today.** "

84%

► The worms' turn



Psychic judo involves two mind-benders who attempt to destroy each other with energy bolts squeezed from their stomachs. An energy bolt can be directed to avoid the defensive shields your opponent erects – the shields not only keep bolts at bay but also absorb their energy, so they're worth building if you can. Five minute-long rounds make for a gruelling contest.

There's a return to near-normality with the next event, head-throwing. The competitors here are a strange pair who enjoy removing their heads and throwing them as far as they can. They run down a small track and before reaching the foul throw line they must rip off their heads and pitch them into the distance.

Ideally, the alien cranium should travel upwards at as close to 45° as possible (the angle is shown onscreen) and extra propulsion can be achieved by flapping the ears of the head as it flies. But the head's nose must stick in the ground when it comes to rest, or it's a foul.

There are three throws per contest and the longest throw wins.

Heads are screwed on tightly for the final fantastic event, the metamorph marathon. During this race one of five forms – runner, burrower, jumper, flyer or 'rest state' – can be adopted to suit the terrain, but controlling your speed is crucial, particularly when you're a flyer.

And after this all you'll need is a relaxing Radox bath.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Sinclair
Graphics: many original aliens with humourous animation
Sound: limited spot effects and a few short tunes
General rating: *Galactic Games* gives a clever and funny twist to the decathlon format

Presentation	72%
Graphics	76%
Playability	64%
Addictive qualities	65%
OVERALL	**71%**

I·K·+



A sudden back flip

Two years after the appearance of the original, a sequel to System 3's *International Karate* (68% in Issue 24) has arrived. The imaginatively-named *IK+* again features a two-player option, but this time there's a trio of new moves, a remixed Rob Hubbard soundtrack and a new approach to the gameplay.

Press FIRE and the action begins with the appearance of three players – one controlled by the player and the other two computer-controlled (or, in two-player mode, two controlled by players

" IK+ is definitely the best fighting game on the Spectrum. I've been playing it for two days solidly without a sign of boredom (admittedly I'm still on purple belt!).

The graphics are quite pretty; the men are the same as The Way Of The Exploding Fist**'s, years ago, but the colours and animations of the background are very good.**

The music is very subdued, even on the 128K machines, but it's an excellent tune, and though the spot FX are somewhat unatmospheric (they sound more like slaps than flying double face kicks), IK+ **zips along at a terrifically addictive pace. "**

MIKE 94%



Beating 'em all: *IK +*


Three on the screen – but only one will win

Producer: **System 3**
Retail price: **£9.99**
Author: **Archer Maclean**

A CRASH Smash

and one by the computer). A free-for-all ensues, with each combatant attempting to knock down either opponent. The player has 14 different moves accessible via the joystick in conjunction with FIRE, including a double kick, head butt, back flip, front punch and high kick.

Points are awarded to a fighter who knocks down an opponent with a successful kick or punch – one point for a reasonable knockout and two for a particularly good job. The objective is to score five points before the others, or to score the highest within the 30-second time limit.

If a fighter scores five points, his time remaining is turned into bonus points. The second-highest scorer goes through to the next round, and for the lowest scorer it's game over. If no players score five, the two highest scorers progress.

The action starts on white-belt level, and progresses through yellow to green, purple and finally black. The levels get progressively more difficult, with black-belt level requiring fast reflexes to survive.

When every third level is completed there's a chance to increase score on a bonus screen. The fighter appears in the centre of the screen and is armed with a defensive shield. Balls bounce into the screen from either side and are deflected to increase the score. 100 are given for each ball deflected, with their speed increasing in velocity till one knocks over the combatant, whereupon the next level is tackled.

" You may have thought The Way Of The Exploding Fist was addictive with its one-on-one combat, but when you throw in another computer-controlled character the urge to bash even more people to the ground is immense.

And IK+'s improvements on International Karate are obvious – gone is the flickery animation, and in its place is a wide range of well-executed moves; gone is the tacky speech synthesis, replaced with a superb soundtrack and effects.

But where IK+ scores so highly over the competition is in the amount of action. You've got to keep an eye on two opponents, and the bonus screen requires skilled hand-eye coordination. This is the martial-arts game to go for. "

PAUL 94%

" IK+ is a vast improvement on its predecessor. It's very professionally designed in all aspects, particularly in the graphics department. The beautifully varied rippling-water effects and setting sun are complemented by the smoothly-animated, fast-moving characters, leaping and flipping around the screen in barely-restrained chaos.

It is just easy enough to lull you into a false sense of security, just difficult enough to reward you with a kick in the face.

The onscreen presentation is clear and informative, with many lighter touches and a more relaxing (!) bonus screen to offset the manic kicking and punching. You also get a long list of options (the two-player mode is great) and a neat booklet. Add to this an extensive high-score table, and you have one of the most professional and action-packed beat-'em-ups on the Spectrum. "

NICK 90%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: only one background (complete with rippling river), but the animation of all three participants is amazingly fast, accurate and smooth
Sound: excellent Rob Hubbard remix on 128K; 48K effects also add to the atmosphere
Options: one or two players
General rating: vastly better than all other beat-'em-ups – even *The Way Of The Exploding Fist*. The one-player game is as addictive and playable as the two-player, which makes for long-lasting appeal.

Presentation	90%
Graphics	90%
Playability	92%
Addictive qualities	92%
OVERALL	**91%**

ENLIGHTENMENT – DRUID II

Producer: **Firebird**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **design by Dene Carter, Spectrum program by Brian Pollock**

Expelled from the land of Belorn 103 years ago, Acamantor the dark mage has returned. And in this sequel to Firebird's highly-regarded chart-topping *Druid* (90% Overall in Issue 35), the druid Hasrinaxx once again takes up the fight against the demon prince, travelling to Acamantor's tower to vanquish the nefarious necromancer forever.

Hasrinaxx begins his quest near the village of Ishmar, and must traverse nine multidirectionally-scrolling lands as well as five levels of Acamantor's tower, threatened all the way by fire, water and his dark enemy's hordes.

The druid's protection comes from power bolts and the 25 different spells which he can pick up and use against the swarming enemies, though their own magic powers can make his life difficult. Some spells are ineffective on particular demons, so it's a case of working out which spell to shoot at whom.

If things get tough, Hasrinaxx can create an 'elemental' to help influence the battle. This large and lumbering creature is controlled either by another player or with a key which can set it on WAIT, FOLLOW or SEND (to send it ahead of Hasrinaxx). The elemental protects Hasrinaxx by stomping on attackers till its magic powers are exhausted.

Most of the screen in *Enlightenment – Druid II* is taken up by the scrolling display of Hasrinaxx's quest. A panel below shows incoming messages as well as the Druid's inventory and details of the elemental in use.

When all the Druid's energy has disappeared and the game has ended, his efforts are rated according to how much of the quest was solved. Orc Breath is the lowest of the 14 ratings, and the title of Overlord is awarded when the wicked Acamantor is finally destroyed.

BYM

" The reduced graphics of Enlightenment – Druid II **crowd the small playing area, and single-colour screens add to the confusion. There also seems to be some confusion in the inlay about druids – the ancient priests weren't Christians, so why does this one have a crucifix? "**

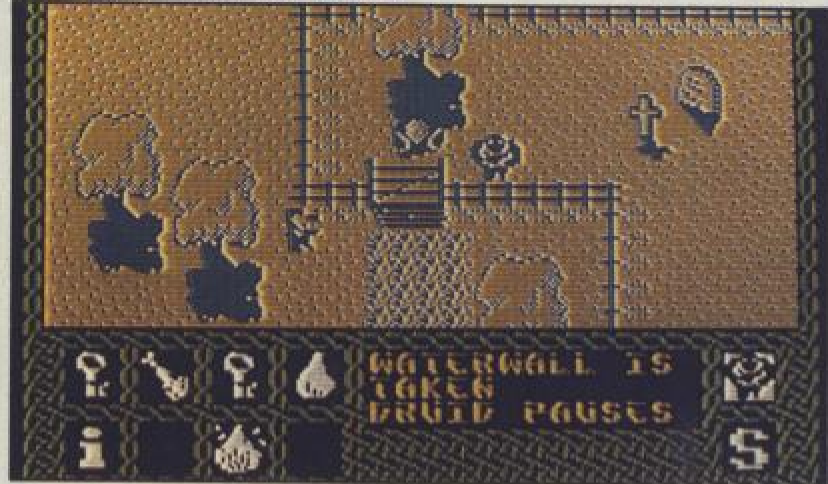
58%

BEN

" This feels very similar to its predecessor, though it's nice not getting stuck in the playing area. Roaming around new territory and finding and casting spells is still great fun, and there are some good new features, but though Enlightenment – Druid II **is well above average it doesn't match the original. "**

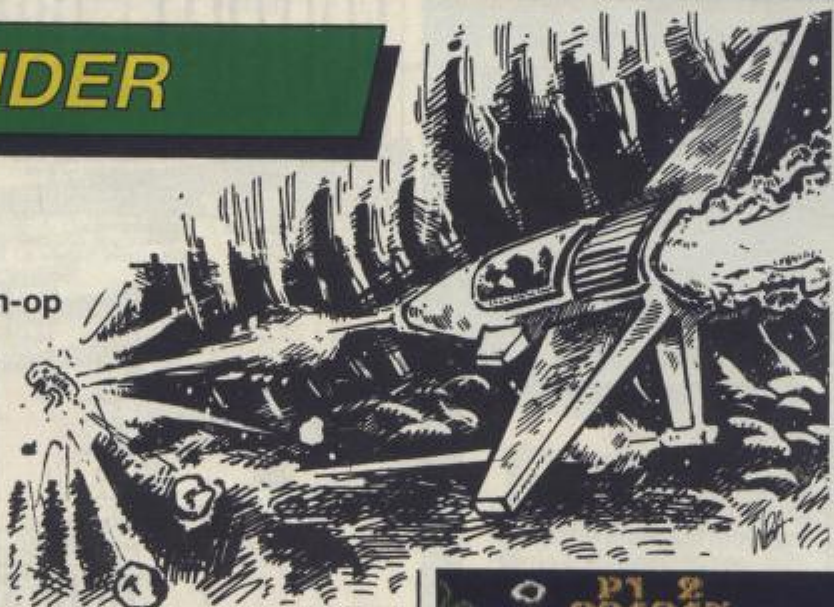
80%

► **Druids aren't what they used to be**



SALAMANDER

Producer: **Konami**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Author: **Andrew Glaister, from a Konami coin-op**



In this coin-op conversion presented as 'the *Nemesis* sequel', a giant salamander has swallowed your minuscule spacecraft, sending you on a terrifying journey down the amphibian's horizontally-scrolling alimentary canal.

The spaceship is directed up and down within the digestive tract, and accelerates to avoid the unpleasant obstructions that lie within this particular salamander.

Lethal encrustations on the intestinal walls spit deadly particles, and pairs of thrashing, grasping giant arms accompany this biological arsenal. All are blasted out of the way, before they block the route and force the ship to crash.

The salamander's insides are split into several different levels, each guarded by a large creature that is destroyed to progress to the next.

ROBIN

" Like the arcade original, Salamander **is playable from the word go. The graphics are colourful and detailed, and the scrolling is smooth – there's a decent title tune, too, although the in-game effects are the usual zap sounds of shoot 'em ups. However, it's infuriating to be forced to start a level again whenever you lose a life, but in a way this adds to the appeal and keeps the player coming back for more. If you're a shoot 'em up fan, you could well enjoy** Salamander **"**

78%

BEN

" As shoot 'em ups go, Salamander **is infuriating – but is still very good. The gameplay is fast, exciting and addictive, and offers plenty of challenge.** Salamander **players might find that Konami have missed out quite a lot of the original arcade features, but if it's a good shoot 'em up you're after – this is a good one to go for. "**

84%



PAUL

" Druid was good fun because of its originality (on the Spectrum, at least), but sadly Enlightenment – Druid II doesn't expand on the theme. The basic graphics are still recognisable, but smaller and less adventurous, and boredom soon rears its head because there's so much walking around with very little to do. "

65%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: small and monochromatic but neat
Sound: minimal effects and no music
Options: one or two players
General rating: not up to the high *Druid* standard

Presentation	66%
Graphics	59%
Playability	71%
Addictive qualities	62%
OVERALL	**68%**

BYM

" The brilliant loading screen is followed by a game that's not so hot. It's incredibly frustrating having to go all the way back to the beginning of a level when you die, and some players might find this a little too much. It's a shame the gameplay is so annoying – because the graphics, scrolling and sound effects are all exceptionally good. Try before buying. "

76%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: colourful, with smooth scrolling and vivid loading screen
Sound: good title tune and effects
Options: definable keys
General rating: a swift and exciting shoot 'em up with one frustrating fault: losing a life returns you to the level's start

Presentation	76%
Graphics	79%
Playability	83%
Addictive qualities	60%
OVERALL	**79%**

INSIDE OUTING

Producer: **The Edge**
Retail price: **£8.99**
Author: **Michael St Aubyn**

Old Mr Crutcher has, to put it bluntly, snuffed it. This puts his widowed wife in difficulty, because before he passed to a better place her spouse had taken it into his head to hide her jewels from potential thieves.

So, after a bit of lateral thinking, she decides to employ a thief to find them for her.

As The Edge's game begins, this tea leaf is in her spacious home, about to begin his search. He can move in all directions through the house, exiting through one doorway and appearing in the doorway of the adjacent room. The thief can also climb stairs and leap onto furniture.

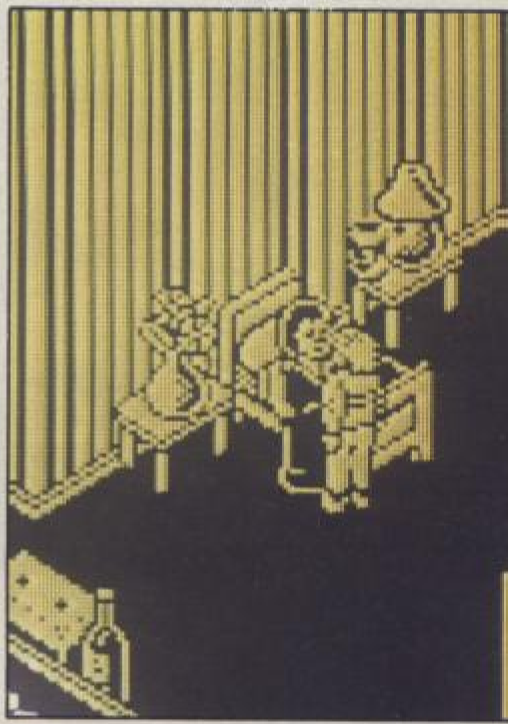
One room is seen at a time, in 3-D and great detail. Each is furnished with such items as tables, chairs, telephones, bookcases and paintings. Each object is independent of every other, so a telephone that rests on a small table can be pushed to the floor. Other items can be picked up and dropped.

The careful manipulation of these objects is important to solving the puzzles that will lead to the missing gems. There are numerous subproblems which can earn welcome points: for instance, pocketing the snooker balls or picking up a bottle when carrying a glass add to your score.

The 12 gems are hidden in a variety of places, some obvious, others in more obscure positions. There are hidden passageways to be discovered, pictures to be moved and disguised wall safes to be uncovered before all the jewellery can be found.

But it's not as simple as it sounds – the products of the late Mr Crutcher's bizarre scientific experiments see to that. Some of the rooms are patrolled by savage mice and budgies that can take down a criminal's life force faster than a long stretch in the nick.

When a jewel has been picked up, it must be taken the bedroom of Lady Crutcher and dropped before her.



► **A gem:** *Inside Outing*

DAVE

" At first Inside Outing reminded me of M.O.V.I.E. – but I was let down. This is a novel game with some lovely 3-D graphics and lots of detail in every room, but in monochrome it looks very plain. And it soon gets boring just walking around a house. "

76%

PAUL

" This 3-D arcade adventure surpasses even the great M.O.V.I.E.. It's the closest thing to real life on the Spectrum. Nearly everything you can do in a real house is possible in Inside Outing – even down to jumping on the pool table and kicking the balls into the pockets. And the superbly drawn and animated graphics (you wouldn't think you could get so much detail on a wine bottle) add to the lifelike effect.

Inside Outing is set up very like Piranha's Nosferatu, but everything seems much more realistic – the graphics are more solid, and there are many more objects (like a pile of plates in the dining room, each one of which is an individual object which can be picked up separately).

The jewels are also hidden in the most strange (but obvious if you've seen a lot of thrillers) places – I even found one in a wall safe behind a painting. It all makes Inside Outing a gem of a game. "

94%

NATHAN

" The inlay says 'never before have you seen a 3-D game as impressive as this!' – but The Edge produced the classic 3-D arcade adventures Fairlight and Fairlight II, which are far better than this. The objects in this 3-D house are so out of proportion they make the whole game look stupid (the phone is twice as big as the tables and chairs). Despite these faults, Inside Outing is quite playable and it's easy to make all the necessary moves. But it's all been done before much better . . . "

75%

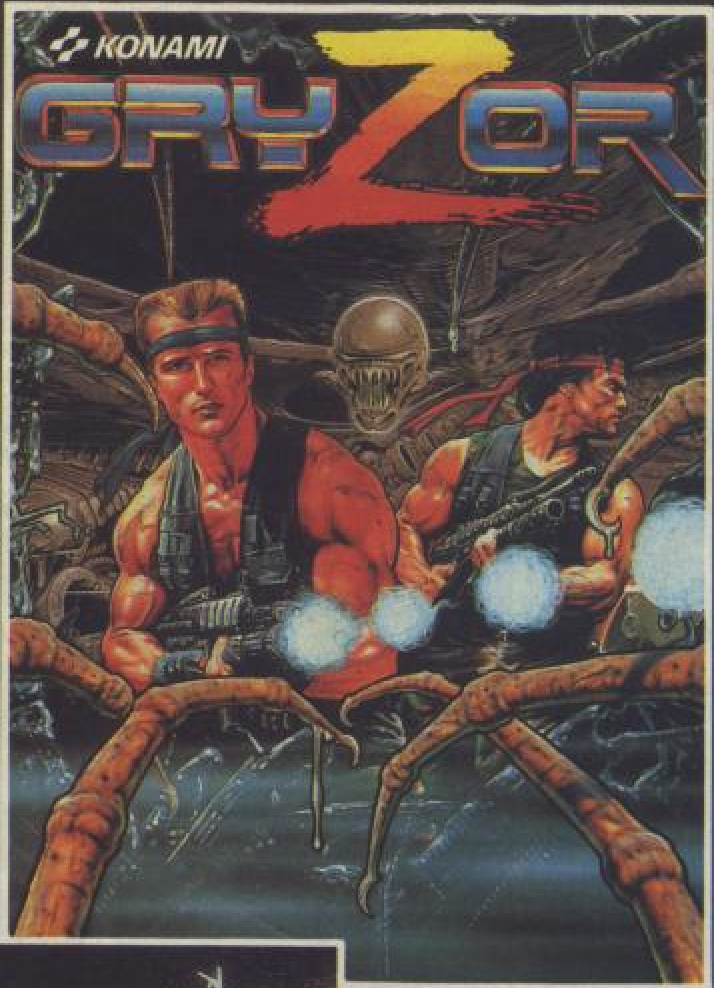
► **'The closest thing to real life' or 'just walking around a house'?**



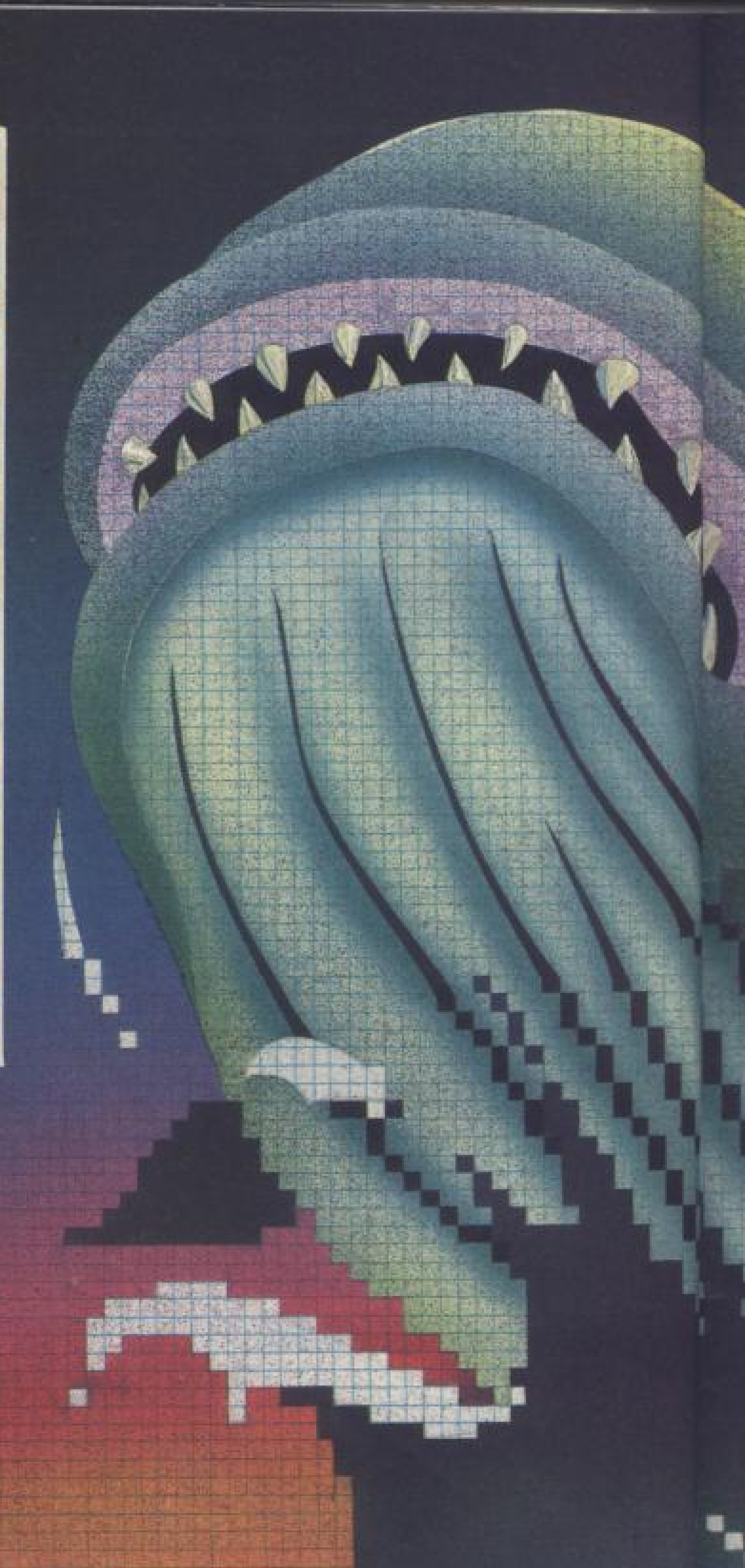
COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: superb – every object is individually designed to look as near to the real thing as possible
Sound: simple, poor spot effects
General rating: one of the greatest arcade adventures since *M.O.V.I.E.* and *The Great Escape*, *Inside Outing* is very involving (though nothing new) and the graphics are stunningly detailed

Presentation	70%
Graphics	84%
Playability	78%
Addictive qualities	74%
OVERALL	**82%**







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GAUNTLET II

Producer: **US Gold**
Retail price: **£7.99**
Author: **Tony Porter**

This is the age of the sequel – *Gauntlet II* follows US Gold's phenomenally successful *Gauntlet* just over a year after the original's release.

Here, four brave warriors wait to battle against virtually insurmountable odds in a desperate bid for freedom.

Each has different attributes and characteristics. Thor is well-armoured and a fine fighter but has poor magic skills; Thyra has more magic, but is not such a strong fighter; the wizard Merlin has of course excellent magic, but carries no armour and cannot fight well either; and Questor is an elf with some fighting skills, armour and very good magic.

You can choose any one of these characters to undertake the dangerous course that leads them to ever-higher levels on a perilous mission beset by a myriad of monsters.

Generators release the villainous monsters into the labyrinthine 100 levels of dungeons through which our heroes journey.

The stock of devilish bogeymen includes disappearing ghosts, club-wielding grunts, fireball-shooting demons, rock-hurling lobbers, sorcerers and super sorcerers, floor-covering acid puddles and Death himself, who can only be fought with magic.

Further evil distractions include the IT monster, which can transform a warrior into IT by touch alone; and the THAT, which can deprive any warrior of his powers and potions as well as taking away 100 valuable health points.

Should a warrior choose not to fight against the fiendish flocks and dally for 30 seconds, locked doors are opened, and more monsters which lurk waiting behind them are released upon their hapless victim.

But the flow of monsters can be halted by destroying the generators.

Among the heroes' weapons are ten super shots which can take out any monster in their path; reflective shots that can be fired around corners; and glowing red transporters which take their occupant to the nearest location containing another transporter.

And special potions found in the dungeons of *Gauntlet II* confer upon the user increased armour, magic, shot power and speed, and improve a warrior's ability to pick up items and amulets which temporarily give him special powers. Food a.id cider restore a warrior's health.

Sometimes potions can be found in the treasure chests which are scattered through the subterranean netherworld and which can be shot for points – but beware. Other caskets are dangerous, containing only Death.

Keys also lie upon the dungeon floors, and at random moments treasure rooms appear. A warrior must then enter the treasure room and collect as many valuables as possible before time runs out.

But there are obstacles all around. Walls can prove impenetrable, though some can be blasted out of existence; force fields, which drain health points, are effective periodically and cannot be destroyed; traps can make walls disappear when triggered; and stun tiles temporarily knock out those who step upon them.

Some exits are easily reached, but others move about continuously, or are fake, being no more than painted floor tiles.

NICK

" The small graphics and dismal tuneless sound just aren't worth it, and Gauntlet II **is pointlessly similar to the original** Gauntlet **– the same idea, the same graphics, but not the same CRASH Smash! "**

55%

MIKE

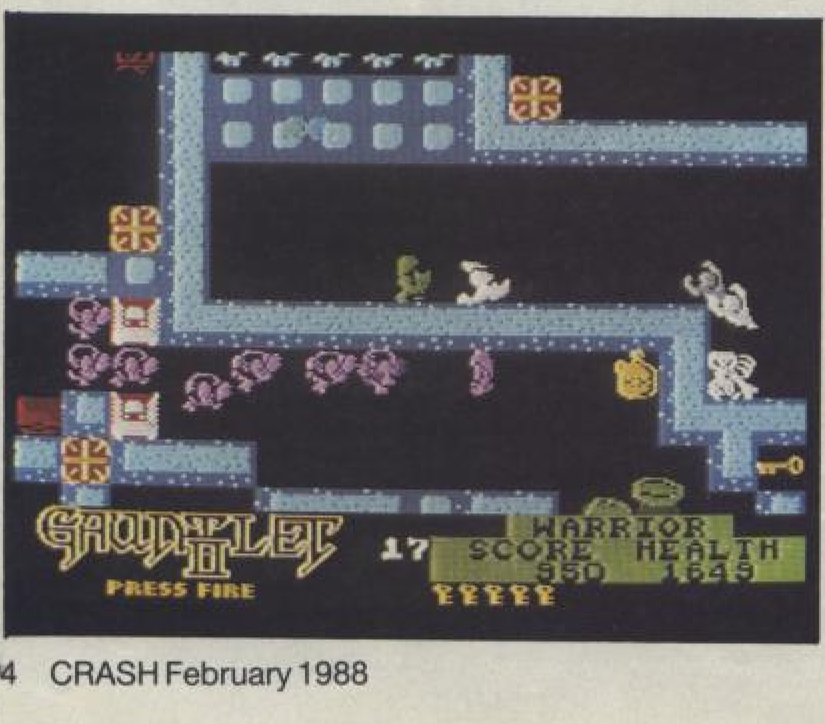
" Hacking a path through hordes of hell-fiends should provide greater entertainment than this. Certainly, the potential is there: the instructions do much to set the grisly scene and create a hack'n'slay atmosphere, and the presentation is subtly effective.

Unfortunately, this subtlety goes too far when it comes to sound – bleeps and peeps simper apologetically as your character cuts, slashes and chops, each squeak too quiet and indistinguishable from the others.

The characters and monsters are sharply drawn and move well, but the colour scheme is a little bland – more plain dull than evocatively sombre. Gauntlet II **isn't much of an improvement on the original, just different, and the differences don't merit buying the sequel if you've got** Gauntlet. **"**

66%

▶ **'The same idea, the same graphics' as** *Gauntlet*





▶ **Dungeons ever deeper:** *Gauntlet II*

NATHAN

" Gauntlet **was a great arcade conversion, it was expanded by** The Deeper Dungeons **(extra levels which could be bought and added to the basic game), and** Gauntlet II **will add to this elite group of classics. It follows the same lines as its predecessor, but has some original qualities too – such as the useful option to bring in a second fighter when you need one. And new hazards and foes present new problems, giving this sequel a feel of its own. "**

74%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: small and effective, but no improvement over the original's
Sound: poor collision effects; lacks a decent tune
Options: choice of four players
General rating: a follow-up for sure, but hardly different enough from *Gauntlet* to be a valuable supplement

Presentation	71%
Graphics	61%
Playability	62%
Addictive qualities	63%
OVERALL	**65%**

TERRAMEX

Producer: **Quicksilva**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **Shaun Hollingworth, Pete Harrap**

OK, try to remain calm when I tell you this.

There's a great big asteroid heading towards Earth, it's almost here and if it hits there'll never be another series of *EastEnders*.

But there's no need to panic. If Albert Eyestrain, the famous scientific misspelling, can be found we're in with a chance. But this may be easier said than done, for Albert's warnings of the impending asteroid were ignored many years ago and now he's taken himself off to the desert in a fit of pique.

Five explorers gather together to formulate a plan. Only one of them can go to locate the lost scientist, but who shall it be? Should it be Fortisque-Smithe, Herr Krusche, Wu Pong, Big John Caine or Henri Beaucoup? Each has different strengths and weaknesses befitting their different characters and nationalities.

After one of these fine upstanding men has been chosen, he is dropped into the ruggedness of a mountainous chain. Now he must set about the task of finding the missing genius in the surrounding wilderness riddled with underground caverns.

The terrain is filled with puzzles that can befuddle the brain of any explorer. But helpful items are scattered about the horizontally-scrolling screens. These accessories include a vacuum cleaner, which on certain screens allows you to fly up into the clouds; a flute to charm the scales off certain types of reptiles; large bellows; and political manifestoes (full of hot air – literally).

When these are gathered, they appear in an acquisition box at the bottom of the screen – and if they're not wanted immediately they can be transferred to the heads of an accompanying team of native bearers.

Sometimes the explorer himself will suggest items that are needed to progress, but be warned – half the time he's mistaken.

And there are many traps for the unwary explorer. He can easily fall foul of a venomous rock snake.



Even if the missing scientist is discovered he must still be persuaded to help save the world. If he accepts this awesome challenge, all the equipment he needs – a large red disk, an antenna, a battery and an atomic pile – must be found. When all this has been collected the prof can construct his Positronic Asteroid Deflector.

But before he can do anything else he must have a cup of piping hot tea . . .

With the Deflector finally complete, our intrepid hero uses it as a giant pinball machine. With a flip the asteroid can be flicked away from Earth and out into empty space, keeping the world safe and free for decent arcade adventures.

MIKE

" It's ages since we've seen a platform game as basic as this. Terramex **could be quite good – Ben Daglish's continuous tune is excellent, making the best of the 128's sound chip – but despite cute and excellently-coloured graphics there's little to enjoy in** Terramex.

And it suffers from chronic Jet Set Willy **syndrome: losing life in some places results in multiple deaths, which is both annoying and, I think, the result of dubious screen design.** Terramex **might be worth a couple of quid for the tune and graphics, but not much more. "**

58%

BYM

" Certainly a case of warped humour here: using a party manifesto's hot air to inflate an air balloon?! Terramex **has so many sweet touches it's unbelievable. And there's so much attention to fine detail, yet no clutter. A contorted mind won't go amiss in playing** Terramex, **so be prepared for some hard working-out. "**

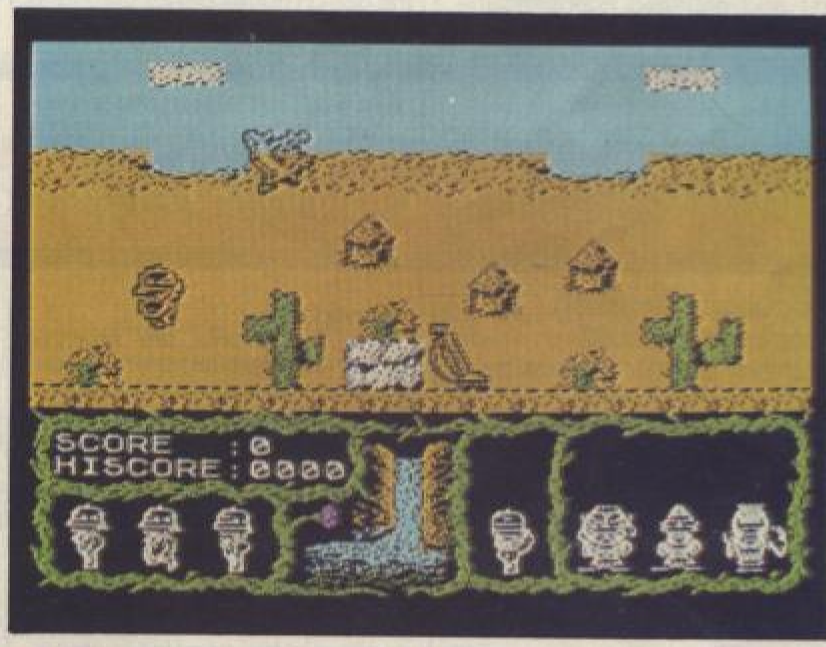
80%

NATHAN

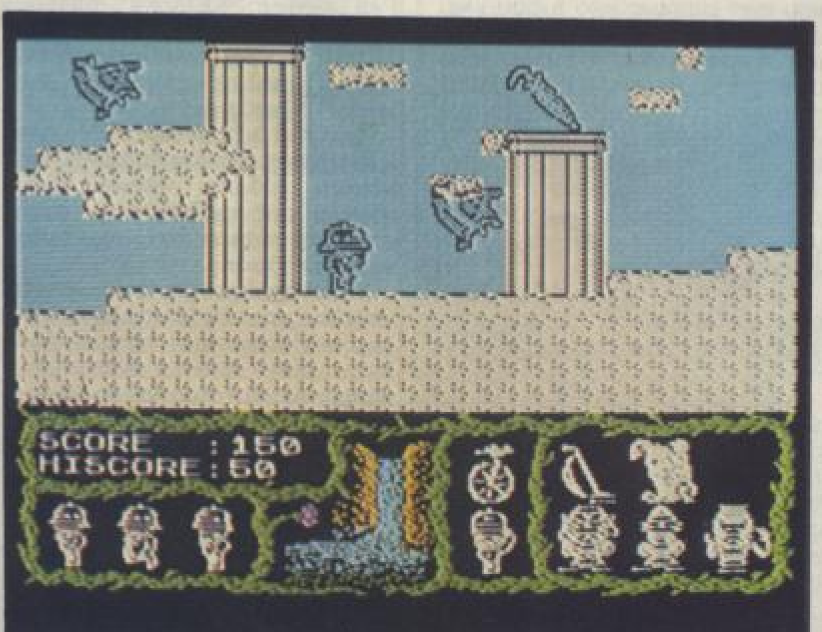
" There's plenty to do in Terramex **and the hazards encountered are detailed and well-positioned. It's fun, too – I just love bouncing over things and flying around on vacuum cleaners and hot-air balloons.** Terramex **is a welcome alternative to the usual dull arcade adventure. "**

92%

▶ **'Warped humour':** *Terramex*



▶ **'Complex and involving, with excellent presentation'**



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: monochrome, but very detailed drawing and animation
Sound: superb 128 tune by Ben Daglish throughout game
Options: choose to play any one of six characters
General rating: a complex and involving arcade adventure, with excellent presentation

Presentation	87%
Graphics	87%
Playability	81%
Addictive qualities	90%
OVERALL	**80%**

OUT OF THIS WORLD

Producer: **Reaktör**
Retail price: **£8.99**
Authors: **Bettertech; Spectrum version by Tony Cooper**

Propelled by his own arrogant search for speed, Chuck Harrison is catapulted into The Other World in his new jet fighter.

There he is trapped amongst phalanxes of alien ships which will rip his ship apart with their touch. To avoid or destroy them, Chuck must skilfully manoeuvre his fighter above a horizontally-scrolling landscape, without dropping too low and hitting the scenery.

Captain Chuck's plane carries a fearsome array of weaponry, but as the game begins only his basic quark cannon is in service. A successful shot takes out enemy space ships and earns points, and as some of these enemy spacecraft disintegrate they release energy pods which correspond to different weapon types. Chuck can collect these and so enhance his arsenal. The first pod gathered energises the appropriate weapon, and the next activates it.

Blasters (two-way, three-way, four-way and seven-way), a wide beam and a laser blaster are all available this way. Life and speed pods are also worth picking up.

However, if the energy pod collected doesn't correspond to the type of weapon then in use, that weapon cuts out and its energy levels must be increased before it becomes operational again. And recharging becomes more difficult as courageous Chuck delves deeper into the wilds of alien territory.

There are eight levels and seven bonus levels for Harrison to fight his way through. After destroying so many enemy craft that they surrender, he gains access to the next level.

Two former Ariolasoft technical consultants, Gary Yorke and James Poole, joined forces to form the design house Bettertech – and this is their first product, released by their old employers (Reaktör is one of those crazy, crazy Ariolasoft labels).

CRITICISM

● " I sat patiently through a pointlessly complicated loading system waiting to be impressed by what the inlay boasted would be a 'Psychedelic Experience'. I was greeted by a monochrome shoot-'em-up! The graphics are poorly-designed and confusing, the scrolling is jerky, and the sprites move several character squares at a time when the action speeds up.

Bugs abound, with bits of static landscape and enemy ships appearing all over the screen, and there are virtually no sound effects (though the title theme is passable).

If a new design house decides to make its debut with yet another *Zynaps* clone, the programming and presentation must make up for the clapped-out concept. In *Out Of This World* the implementation accentuates that unoriginality – it's embarrassingly bad. "

MIKE 27%

● " *The only thing out of this world about this game is the setting. The graphics and gameplay are only average, and Reaktör's attempt at a* Defender/Nemesis*-type game lacks is enough variation to keep the playing interested for more than a few games.*

No matter how far you get, all that happens is that a few aliens



WINTER OLYMPIAD 88

Producer: **Tynesoft**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Author: **Derek Brewster**

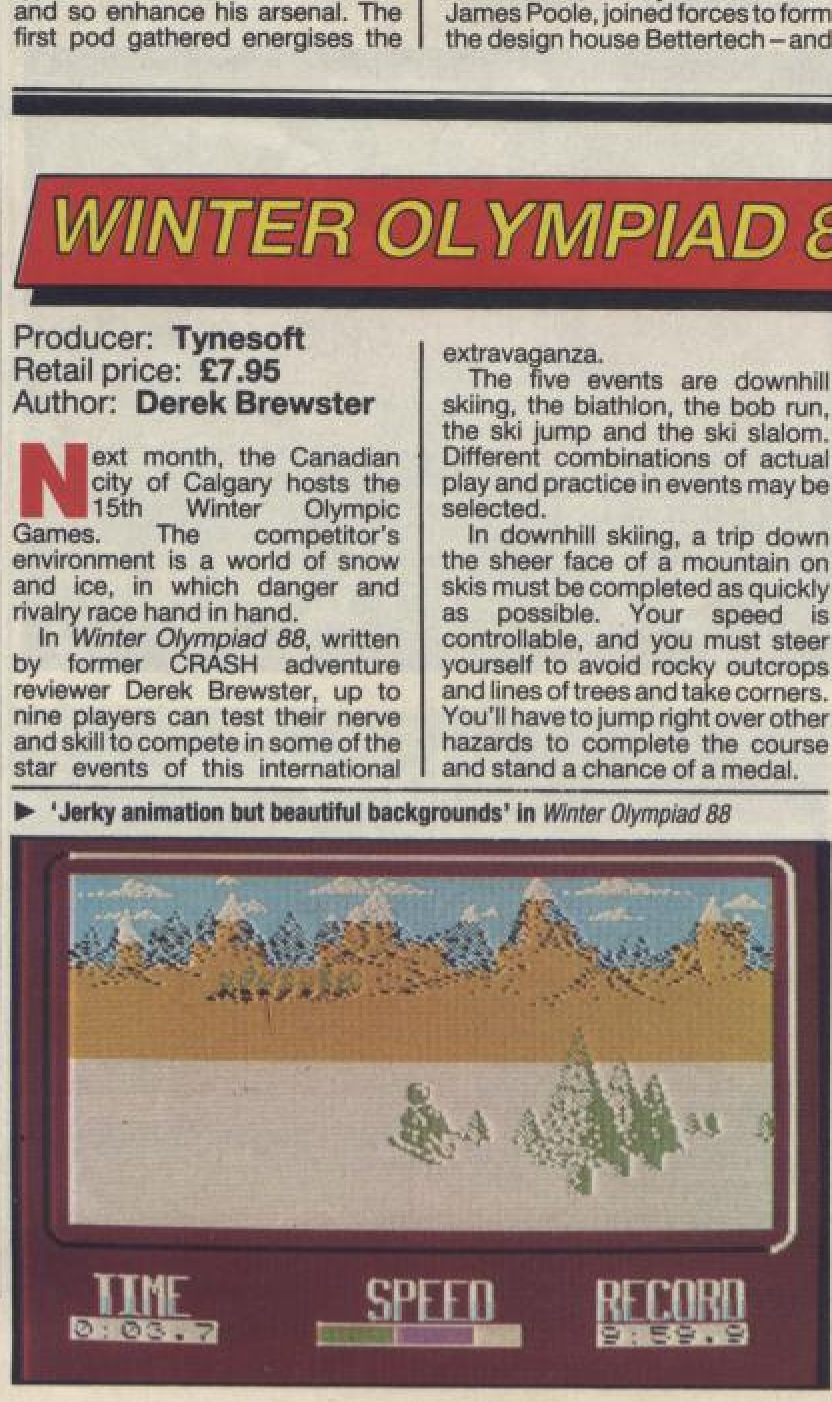
Next month, the Canadian city of Calgary hosts the 15th Winter Olympic Games. The competitor's environment is a world of snow and ice, in which danger and rivalry race hand in hand.

In *Winter Olympiad 88*, written by former CRASH adventure reviewer Derek Brewster, up to nine players can test their nerve and skill to compete in some of the star events of this international extravaganza.

The five events are downhill skiing, the biathlon, the bob run, the ski jump and the ski slalom. Different combinations of actual play and practice in events may be selected.

In downhill skiing, a trip down the sheer face of a mountain on skis must be completed as quickly as possible. Your speed is controllable, and you must steer yourself to avoid rocky outcrops and lines of trees and take corners. You'll have to jump right over other hazards to complete the course and stand a chance of a medal.

► **'Jerky animation but beautiful backgrounds' in** *Winter Olympiad 88*



The biathlon has competitors pumping their legs backward and forward in a speedy cross-country ski walk. But the physical exhaustion generated by this activity must be balanced against the requirements of the shooting range, where the skier calms his nerves and steadies his arm to fire at six targets. A miss costs valuable time.

On the specially-built ice chute, you can clamber into a bob sled and head towards a distant finish line. A speedy start is the essence of success, for without that initial momentum the craft cannot hurtle quickly through the bends of the track. To enhance your time, what little steering you have must be smooth, to take you through the top of the bends where maximum velocity is achieved.

Go too high, however, and the bob can be sent off the track, and your chance of a medal goes with it.

You take to the air in the ski jump after making a death-defying descent down the elevated jump. Maximum points are awarded by the judges for distance and style; good style is keeping your skis snugly together while you're gliding through the air.

Once this event of nerve has been completed the ski slalom gets under way. With new strips of waxed wood strapped to your boots you can begin. Wend your way through a succession of poles to reach the finish in the fastest time and you're a winner. Remember, though, to keep red slalom flags to the right of you and blue flags to the left.

Ocean's Olympic innovation .... *page 8*

CRITICISM

● " Winter Olympiad 88 **is one of the best sports compilations I've seen since Epyx's Smashed** Winter Games **(reviewed in Issue 26). It's very well-presented, with a great opening sequence and a rather good tune.**

And the actual gameplay has a realistic feel – for instance, the slalom skier's whole body moves appropriately to each different manoeuvre, especially when cornering.

The backdrops are nicely detailed, mostly featuring snow-capped mountain ranges and large pine forests. Not many winter-sports games come up to the standard of Winter Olympiad 88. "

NATHAN 64%

● ***" After Epyx's*** Winter Games***, this is a great letdown. Graphically the two games are pretty similar, but when it comes***

appear from out of nowhere in the middle of the screen, do a few spins, then give you their kindest regards and move on.

And as if that's not bad enough, when you die you don't get a great big explosion, or even crash to the ground – you disappear. It's quite off-putting; this can go on for two or three seconds and even then you might have just got lost in the scenery or had a bit of dodgy character-collision.

Out Of This World is very simple, and certainly not effective. "

PAUL **35%**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: monochromatic and badly animated
Sound: a few effects add little to the game
General rating: a very disappointing clone, with none of its genre's good characteristics but all the bad

Presentation	51%
Graphics	36%
Playability	43%
Addictive qualities	32%
OVERALL	**33%**

down to the nitty-gritty gameplay* Winter Games *beats* Winter Olympiad 88 *on every event.

True, there's a nice opening sequence here, but when you have to go through loading every event separately (Winter Games needed only two loads, incidentally) things get tedious.

And as if the dodgy animation, suspect collision-detection and simplistic sound weren't enough, you have to pray that the game won't crash – it's riddled with bugs. The Winter Olympics theme has great potential, but it's wasted on such a mediocre (perhaps rushed) product. "

PAUL **34%**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair (though our copy reset back to keys after the first event!)
Graphics: some jerky animation but some beautiful backgrounds
Sound: a poor attempt at title tunes; simple collision effects
General rating: a dismal failure which loses skis down to Epyx's two-year-old *Winter Games*

Presentation	57%
Graphics	60%
Playability	37%
Addictive qualities	47%
OVERALL	**44%**

COMPENDIUM

Producer: **Gremlin Graphics**
Retail price: **£7.99**

Compendium is a four-pack of familiar board games with a tiddly twist – it's presented as an ordinary tale of the everyday Wink family. Father Wink, a not-so-secret tippler, his wife Mavis, their three children Ralph, Victoria and Tiny Tim, and Sniffer the dog make up the weird Wink household.

The Winks spend their time upon this planet playing Snakes And Hazards, Christmas Ludo, Shove-A-Sledge and Tiddly Drinks.

In Snakes And Hazards, the children and their dog aim to get from the bottom left corner, square 1, and reach the upper left square – number 100 on the chequered game board. Whoever gets there first is the winner.

The players take it in turns to move a number of squares determined by the automatic throw of dice. A display beneath the main screen indicates the present square a character stands on, and the square that they should move to after the throw.

If one of the characters lands on a square containing the foot of a ladder, they go to the top of it, thus avoiding intervening hazards. These include snakes which sprawl across the playing area – if a player lands on a square which incorporates a snake's head, the unlucky victim slides down the serpent till the end of its tail is reached.

But in Snakes And Hazards there are more problems than you find in real Snakes And Ladders, because the nonplaying members of the Wink family interfere and attempt to push their children and dog on to the squares with snake heads.

Still, none of the playing Winks are particularly interested in what they're doing, and this creates the ideal opportunity for the other players to distract them – by picking up objects they might find on the board and dropping them in the path of others.

With luck, the wicked Winks will be diverted by what's dropped in their path. For example, Sniffer stops at lampposts, the baby at a dummy, Ralph at reference books, and Victoria at the telephone.

But Shady Leaf the holly piece, Meanus Puddus and Sam Snake are further crazy creations which can end a player's life straight away if they make contact.

After Snakes And Hazards comes Christmas Ludo. Again the Wink children and Sniffer are involved. Each player has four counters which must be moved from their individual bedrooms around a four-armed Ludo board to reach the safety of the HOME square.

To put a counter into play, a 6 must be showing on the thrown dice. Each counter carries the initial of the player it belongs to. When a 6 is shown another go is allowed. If a counter lands upon another, the lower counter is removed from the board.

This time, mum and dad Wink patrol the board and contact with them immediately ends a player's turn.

At last Mavis and Tiddly, along with Victoria and Ralph, get in on the games-playing act in Shove-A-Sledge. Snow is thick on the ground and Tiny Tim wants to sledge, but he needs some help to push him.

So a grid is marked in the snow with ten divisions, and each of the Wink players has three turns in which to push the sledge between the division lines. The winner is the player who manages to do this successfully in all ten divisions.

A good run up is needed to push the sledge, which can be positioned at the start line, but if the sledge is shoved too hard Tiny Tim may not be home from hospital in time for Tiddly Drinks.

And Sniffer does his best to hinder all this by scampering about in the run-up area.

Almost exhausted by so much activity the Winks come to their final game, Tiddly Drinks. Old Tiddly himself is down at the pub, rather drunk and being irritating. The barmaid serves Tiddly with between one and six pints of beer and after quaffing these drinks at the bar, a tiddly Tiddly wanders away throwing the empty glasses into the air one by one.

Mavis, Victoria, Ralph and Sniffer take it in turns to position themselves as best they can to catch the arcing glassware before it lands upon the floor. A shadow upon the ground gives them some help in judging where the glass will land.

The winner is the Wink who has caught most glasses by closing time.

NICK

" Compendium was a brilliant game for the Christmas season, with snow all over the ground and its of little festive ditties, but seems less interesting in the cold light of January. But the graphics are excellent whatever the season, with bright characters, detailed playing boards and background scenery. "

83%

PAUL

" Let's face it, board games are for boards, and computer games for computers. Sometimes they mix – but more than often the licence of a board game turns out as a miserable translations. And all the subgames in Compendium **are very boring and repetitive.**

There's no computer opponent, which is a major flaw – this always limits the life span and appeal of a game no matter what it's like.

Tiddly Drinks is a strange part of Compendium **because it has to resemblance to any board game, or even to tiddlywinks. And to make** Compendium **even less appealing there's a decidedly Christmassy feel. "**

48%

► **Weak and mild:** *Compendium*



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: festive but fun
Sound: a wide range of Christmas tunes
Options: 1-4 players
General rating: simple fun for all the family, so long as it's only once a year

Presentation	70%
Graphics	70%
Playability	61%
Addictive qualities	57%
OVERALL	**61%**

BRAVESTARR

Producer: **GO!**
Retail price: **£7.99**

Tex Hex is a man of evil, living on the distant world New Texas. Though displaying wickedness to others, he himself is held in the grip of an evil spirit, Stampede, who has ambitions to dominate the planet. His intent is to revitalise ancient bones that can give him great power, but to do that he needs the magic of a captured Shamen.

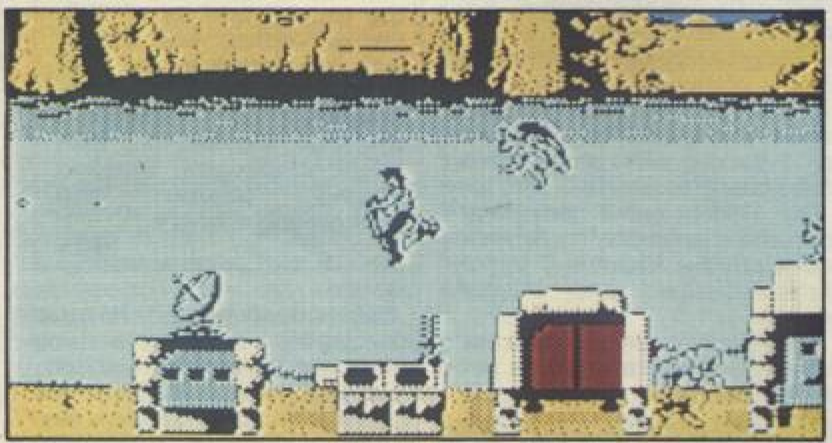
Marshall Bravestarr sets out alone in this tie-in with the Filmation toy line to rescue the Shamen who was his childhood guardian, destroy Stampede and overthrow Tex Hex. But the evil pair have friends who haunt the planetary landscapes. Curs scamper along the ground, winged demons flap above, and marshall lookalikes all pose a threat. Contact with some will only slightly impair his energy levels, but others can take a life with a single shot. Even worse, large bombs can go off, leaving Bravestarr in a very shabby state.

The marshall carries a powerful side arm which can destroy most of his adversaries, earning points in the process. But the adversaries come thick and fast, and he is constantly ducking, or jumping from one building to another to avoid them. Bravestarr's firepower can be increased if he gathers the fast disappearing amulets which periodically appear in the landscape. Other amulets buy time.

There is plenty of scope for gathering information as he goes along. On entering the buildings of Fort Kerium he can ask the people there for useful hints. Bravestarr can pay for the information with money gained by selling off objects acquired on his travels.

By climbing aboard his rocket saddle, he can fly to other parts of New Texas. He can also enter caves and mines, and pick up more hints. But just over eight minutes are all that Bravestarr has in which to complete his mission.

▶ **'Repetitive and unrewarding'?**



CRITICISM

● " *Bravestarr* is a highly addictive cowboy/shoot-'em-up game with brill graphics and colour and plenty to do. One minute you're roaming around a Western-style town and the next you are flying through the air on a saddle rocket on your way to another part of New Texas. Getting information out of the residents of the town is quite hard at first but after a while it gets easier. There is some clash now and then but it certainly doesn't spoil the enjoyment of the game. Bravestarr is great, watch out for it. "

NICK **64%**

● " Another licensing deal just fails to hit the mark – Bravestarr is essentially a very uninspiring horizontally scrolling shoot-'em-up. The only positive thing that can be said about the graphics is that the animation is reasonably smooth; otherwise the use of colour is bland and the still shots (inside buildings) are very muddled.

The scenario is pretentious: New Texas is very much like the old Texas, with a few unimaginative aliens thrown in. The action is far too repetitive and the initial play very unrewarding – controlling your character, particularly, is not flexible enough. Presentation is similarly weak: there is no title screen and a lot more attention could have been paid to detail. For example, when Bravestarr dies a grave appears on the spot - even in midair!

Fans of the toys (and everyone

BLOCKBUSTERS

Producer: **TV Games**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **Oxford Digital Enterprises**

Well, what d'you know? Find out by testing your knowledge with the legendary Bob Holness in *Blockbusters*, the first TV release from Domark's label TV Games. The new label will specialise in game-show licences, and *Countdown*, *Bullseye*, *The Krypton Factor* and *Treasure Hunt* are planned.

In *Blockbusters*, based on a Central TV series, question master Bob smiles benignly on you from one side of the screen; the rest of the display is a pattern of coloured hexagons. In each hexagon is a letter.

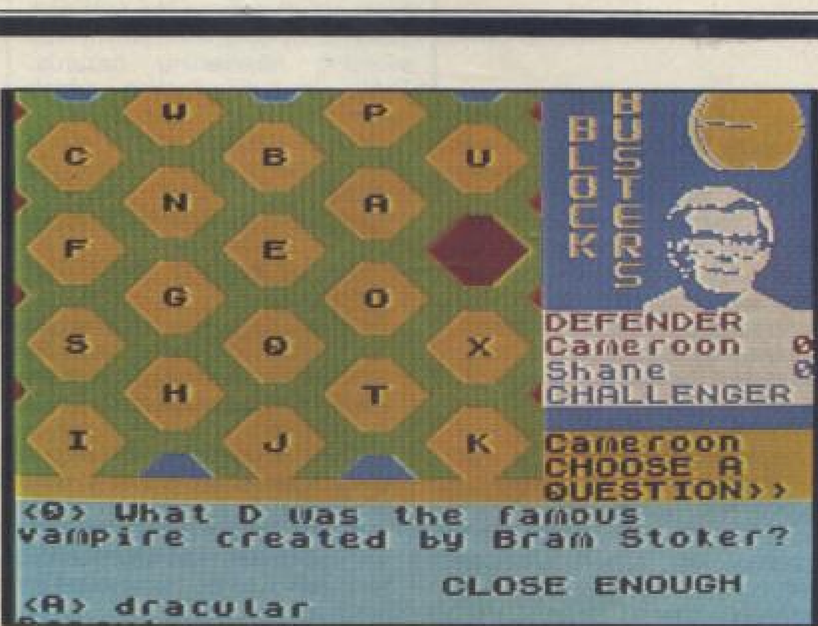
Each player chooses a hexagon on his turn. Bob then asks him a question, the correct answer to which will begin with the letter in the chosen hexagon. (The form is 'what D is a small domestic animal?'. Choose an X and the answer is probably 'xylophone'.)

If the player answers correctly, the hexagon is 'taken' and filled with a colour representing that player; to win, you must capture a line of hexagons from one side of the display to the other.

The spelling of answers needn't be totally correct – and *Blockbusters* will allow some variations through with the comment 'close enough'.

▶ **Take a line of hexagons to win**





▶ ***Blockbusters*: first release from new TV tie-in label**

CRITICISM

● " How many more *Blockbusters*-type quiz games do we have to suffer? This must be the fourth at least, and there's not much you can do with the theme. There's a nice front end and a cute little picture of Bob wobbling his head when he asks a question, but the game is boring and repetitive. There are lots of TV programmes that would make much better games. "

PAUL **42%**

● " What F is an adjective with four letters and describes Blockbusters**? Answer: FAST. You hardly get enough time to**

else, for that matter) should be careful. "
MIKE **38%**

● *" You'd certainly have to be brave to walk into a shop and buy this game. The graphics are so small and jerky that they hurt your eyes. The speed at which every thing happens adds to the confusion initiated by the see-through 'adversaries'.*
The idea of hunting out information in bars seems great (it's even better in real life), but this town likes to keep its secrets secret. "
BYM **32%**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Sinclair
Graphics: ranging from badly-drawn close-ups of people to fast-scrolling detailed town scenes
Sound: average effects add little life to the game
General rating: fans of the toys will not be disappointed, others should approach warily

Presentation	55%
Graphics	49%
Playability	47%
Addictive qualities	46%
OVERALL	**46%**

answer the question when a TIME OUT message appears! But there have been so many games like Blockbusters **that bringing out another seems ludicrous. And most of the questions are too hard for me anyway – winning in** Blockbusters **calls for plenty of brains, so that counts the whole CRASH team out. "**
NICK **47%**

● *" Quiz games lose that vital human element when computerised, eliminating all humour and leave the room dreadfully quiet.* Blockbusters *is very typical of this. But it's good that you don't have to beat an opponent, and* Blockbusters *is certainly a must for those who can't resist showing off their quick thinking. "*
BYM **48%**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: none
Graphics: simple but adequate; absurd picture of Bob Holness
General rating: another quiz game, which we need like an empty H in the H on our shoulders

Presentation	67%
Graphics	48%
Playability	56%
Addictive qualities	44%
OVERALL	**46%**

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

Producer: **Gremlin Graphics**
Retail price: **£7.99**

It's yet another struggle for the secrets of existence in this official tie-in with the much-hyped (and much-derided) *Masters Of The Universe* film – itself a tie-in with the successful cartoon and Mattel toy range.

And Gremlin Graphics hasn't been put off its love of licences by two previous *Masters Of The Universe* games: an arcade adventure from US Gold (28% Overall in CRASH Issue 38) and an adventure from US Gold's subsidiary Adventuresoft (84% in Issue 44).

In Gremlin Graphics's new product, the eight scattered chords to the key that controls time must be found before they can fall into the evil grasp of Skeletor. He-Man is the only one who can avert this disaster.

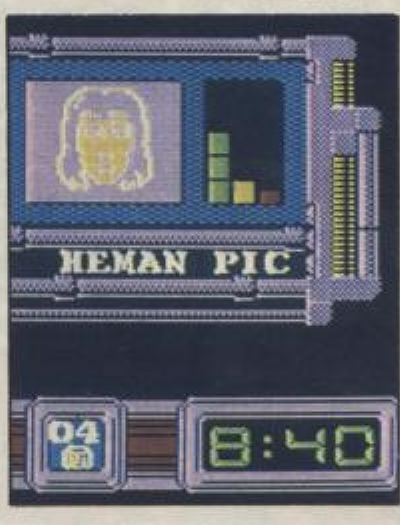
The action commences in the streets where our muscle pumped hero meets numerous creations of Skeletor who can fire upon him. Each time he is hit, they deprive him of valuable energy. The energy which remains is shown by a sword at the side of the main screen. He-Man can restore his energy by gathering the discarded swords that lie about. If his energy drops to zero, one of his four lives is lost.

He-Man can fight back, and when he hits a henchman he scores points. A certain score yields a chord, and on gaining a chord the next stage of the mission can begin. In stage two the hunk chunk hero begins in a scrapyard where he is confronted by two of Skeletor's top crew, Blade and Karg. If they can be beaten, then our man, who makes a body builder look like a babe in arms, moves on to another level.

Battle awaits him all the way along the line, and again those elusive chords remain to be collected. Eventually, when he has climbed a ladder reaching to the sky and travelled on a space-disc, He-Man is transported to the scene of a violent shoot-'em-up against hordes of Skeletor's soldiers.

Should He-Man succumb to these terrifying odds and be captured by these cohorts, then he is taken to the Castle of Greyskull.

► **Gremlin's graphics: 'intricately detailed but need more colour'**



Skeletor is the victor unless He-Man has all eight chords in his hands.

During this final stage, the culmination of all his efforts, He-Man must use all of his guile, strength and combat skill to overwhelm Skeletor and then make himself Master of the Universe. A countdown at the bottom right of the screen, shows the time constraint within which He-Man must work.

MIKE

" After US Gold's depressing licence of the He-Man cartoon it is at least a relief to see that Gremlin has done rather better with the film and its nice to see that the finished game has at least some connection with its subject matter. Everything is pleasantly presented, with attractive backgrounds and small but adequate sprites, though the sound is nothing to get excited about; it consists of distinctly average FX and a rather muted tune. The way in which the screen orientation revolves whenever you change screens enables all scrolling to be vertical (and hence smooth); however a catch is that the effect is very disconcerting. Yet everything remains playable enough, and the variety of subgames provide extra interest. "
71%

NATHAN

" I am glad that Gremlin has got the Masters Of The Universe **licence because it usually makes a first-class job of these 'theme' games. Your first encounter with this one might lead you to believe that it's just another** Gauntlet **clone. But it's smoother than** Gauntlet **because there are fewer characters on the screen and everything's much clearer. I loved the shoot-'em-up and thought that there were some nice little touches such as the energy being in the shape of a sword. The inlay card includes a map which is easy to understand and I think that the cemetery is the best combat area for graphics and gameplay. "**
76%

DAVE

" Masters Of The Universe **presents some interesting graphics though the colour leaves a lot to be desired. However, I didn't find it addictive. The first stage is better than the second, but walking around just shooting everything does get boring. "**
64%

► **Finally mastered: the third** *Masters Of The Universe* **tie-in is the best**



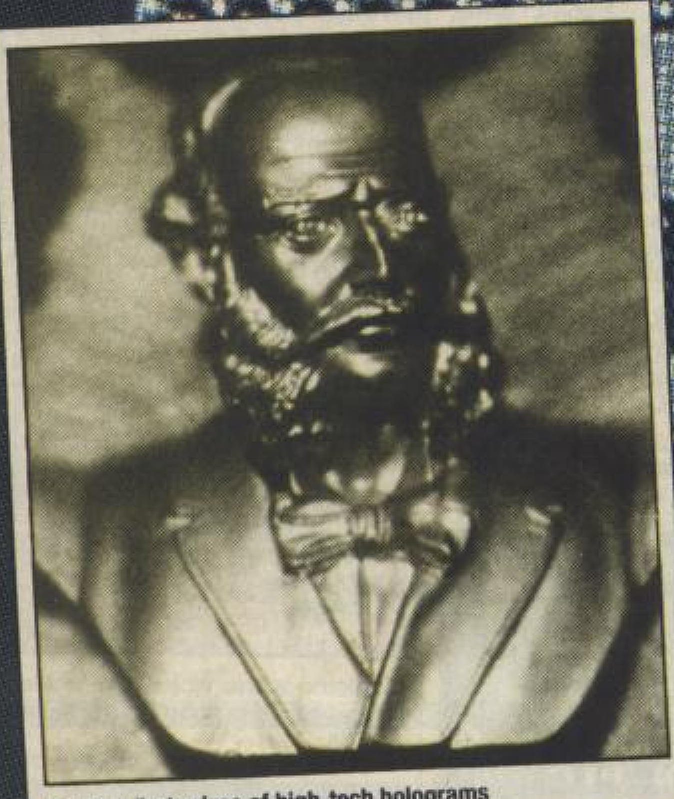
COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: well-animated and intricately detailed, but need more colour
Sound: average spot effects
General rating: the best all three attempts at the cartoon tie-in

Presentation	71%
Graphics	74%
Playability	70%
Addictive qualities	72%
OVERALL	**70%**

IT ALL ADD
AND

incentive SOFTWARE LTD



► Five first prizes of high-tech holograms

SEEING IS BELIEVING WHEN YOU WIN THESE AMAZING HOLOGRAMS

OUR Issue 47 cover Smash ***Driller*** may have impressed you with its 3-D landscape and objects and those 20,000 billion possible views which took 14 months to program – but wait till you see the prizes **Incentive** is offering in this *Driller* competition!

Incentive is giving away five **framed holograms** of Jacques Offenbach – composer of the famous cancan from *Orpheus In The Underworld* – as first prizes in this megamaths puzzler.

Why Offenbach is such a favourite with the hologram artists we don't know, but perhaps it's their cançan-do attitude to the ultimate challenge: creating a 3-D picture on a flat surface.

THEY DO IT WITH COHERENT LIGHT

Holograms are created by illuminating an object (in this case, a bust of Offenbach) with 'coherent light' (such as the light from a laser). Film is exposed to the light reflected from the object, and then when you want to see the hologram you simply place the film before a direct beam of coherent light, such as a powerful lamp. This illuminates the interference patterns on the film and a 3-D image is formed. Now you know.

Holograms are the ultimate high tech – but you can use them anywhere.

HORRORS!

That's not all there is to Incentive's incentives – **30 runners-up** will receive holographs, which are holograms in sticker form. These aptly-named **Horrograms** feature a revolting range of gory pictures.

And every winner will also receive a copy of Incentive's 3-D sensation, Driller. *(So please remember to tell us whether you want it on cassette or +3 disk.)*

THE MAN BEHIND, ABOVE AND UNDERNEATH FREESCAPE

For such special prizes we needed a special problem – and who better to devise such a mind-bender than the man behind Freescape, Ian Andrew?

'What do you get if you add Freescape to *Driller?*' Ian asked us one day.

…S UP WITH …D *DRILLER*

Crash Competition



'Umm … a CRASH Smash!' someone replied smartly.

'No,' retorted Ian, 'you get 310,233,431.'

'Fine,' we said, 'so how did you work that out?'

Ian picked up a piece of chalk and started drawing on a Spectrum monitor:

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    F R E E S C A P E
+         D R I L L E R
= 3 1 0 2 3 3 4 3 1
```

The puzzle is an ordinary addition sum in disguise,' he said, 'where each letter represents a digit between 0 and 9. For instance, E is 1.' ('E's a one, too, that Ian Andrew.)

So all you have to do is work out which digit each letter represents, remembering that E is 1, and write the correct letter next to each digit on the form below. (Then fill in the form and send it to us by **March 8**.)

'Oh, before I forget,' Ian added, 'there are TWO correct solutions to the problem.' So you'd better get both. Thanks a bunch, Ian!

	first solution	second solution
0		
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		

NAME ....

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....

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PSSSSSS
WHA...
GO WALKEE
SQUIZ!
COME IN WHY DON'T YOU!
GAS.. GAS.. GASP... GAS...
GASP!
GAS.. GAS.. GAS
WE DID IT! WE DID IT!
WE ARE FREE... FREE!!
AND I'VE GOT A SHIP OF MY VERY OWN!!
WE?.. WHO IS THIS "WE"?
SPEAK FOR YO'SELF..
WHAT HAPPENED TO "WE"??
ZAZZ ZAZZ
JETMAN HAS HAD ENOUGH! THERE'S ONLY ROOM FOR ONE MASTER ON THIS SHIP...
HAH! A QUICK BLIP ON THE OL' JUICE-PEDAL AND I, FLASH GORDON, WILL BE BACK IN THE SPACEWAYS!!
ONE TO GET READY...
TWO TO GET STEADY...
AN IDDSY-WIDDSY BIT OF LEFT RUDDER AND I'LL BE DEAD ON COURSE FOR PLANET ZARG AND THE IRREPLACABLE TREASURE THAT I LEFT THERE!
TREASURE, EH?
..NICE!
OH, IT'S THE LOONY... I'D FORGOTTEN 'BOUT THE LOONY!
ER... GO MAKE Y'SELF USEFUL! UM... GO PUT THE KETTLE ON... AND HAVE THE PLURPS RUN ME UP A NEW CAPTAINS TUNIC... G'WAN... TROT OFF...
SQUEEZE
SNARL! I'LL STRING ALONG WITH THIS LI'L TWERP UNTIL WE GET TO HIS BURIED TREASURE... AN' THEN.... SQUIT!
MEBBE I COULD GET THE PLURPS TO KNIT HIM A....
STREWF!
SOUNDS LIKE THE PLURPS ARE MUTINEERING!
PEEPLE!
HIM SCAREE
DIS GOOD IDEE WE'S GOT.... WE'S GOIN' GROW US A 'SSASIN SO DESE LOONY CAN'T HURT US NO MO!
YO! DIS 'SSASIN GOIN' KILL DA LOONYS!
US BE FREE.
GROWIT!
YAMP!
NOM!

CRASH ZX SPECTRUM

THE CLASSIFIEDS

CRASH BACK NUMBERS

CRASH BACK ISSUES numbers 1-42 all in good condition, will split. Offers to: Simon Wilson, *15 Chester Way, Boston, Lincs PE21 7PR*. Or Phone: 0205 63096.

CRASH BACK ISSUES 14 to 44. Best offer secures. Tel: 07476 3282 ask for Paul Harris.

EVERY EDITION OF CRASH for sale. Yes, Issues 1-46 all in very good condition. To be sold together, £35. Phone: 01-724 0653 evenings and ask for Chris.

WANTED CRASH MAGS 1-13. Will buy or swap games for them all. Keith Broderick, *74 Leonard Street, Beverley Road, Hull HU7 1RZ*. Tel: 0482 218953.

CRASH ISSUE 2 WANTED. CRASH Issues 10-31 for sale, or exchange. Tel: Formby 31408.

I HAVE GOT ISSUES of CRASH 9 to the present day for sale. Separately they cost £1.50 for 9-16 and Xmas Specials, £1 for the rest. Or the whole lot for £25. Tel: 01-870 9030 ask for Rufus Grantham.

FANZINES

ATTENTION AUSTRALIAN READERS – for the No.1 Australian Sinclair magazine contact: *Auspec, 92 Irwin Street, Werrington, 2760, N.S.W, Australia*. Monthly issue. Caters for both Spectrum and QL users.

***REVU* – ISSUE TWO** out now. Send cheque payable to Mark Kernaghan for 45p (issue 2) or £4 for subscription to: *Revu, 44 Edwinstowe Drive, Sherwood, Nottingham*. Free game with sub.

SPECTRUM TAPE MAG issue two, only £1. 48K or 128K, lots of news, reviews, POKEs, tips, adventure etc. Stamp and cheque to: M Tonks, *57 Myrtle Avenue, Selby, North Yorks YO8 9BG*.

***DROSS* IS A** new mixed items fanzine and costs 50p. Send S.A.E. and make cheques or P.O. payable to Andre Paine, *19 Mascalls Park, Paddock Wood, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 6LW*.

THE MAG 16 pages, Spectrum only. Send 20p plus stamp to: Paul Mugrshed, *52 Greenways, Esher, Surrey KT10 0QD*. Includes *Exolon* Art comp, strategy, news and tips. Don't miss it.

COMPUTER MAGAZINE full of reviews, pen pals, personal adverts, news, POKEs plus lots more! Send a cheque/PO for 50p made payable to Andrew Dungey, *Spectrum Telemag, 46 Green Lane, Penryn, Cornwall TR10 8QJ*.

ONLY £1 Xmas issue of *Spec-tacle* fanzine. Order your copy now! Bigger, better, brighter and no more black blobs. P Bowman, *20 Monins Road, Dover, Kent CT17 9NX*.

A NEW FANZINE called *Extra*. Send 35p to: Leon Isaacs, *18 Norton Crescent, Baldock, Herts*.

HARDWARE SALES

ALL BOXED AS NEW. Spectrum 128K, Joystick, Printer, Enterprize Modem, (various baud rates, comms, interface and software) plus £150 of top games and m/c books. All for £300. Tel: Mr G Moore 061 795 1103.

128K +2 SPECTRUM with 2 microdrives, interface 1 (malfunctioning), joystick, software, Centronics printer interface, multiface 1. Worth over £450. For sale at ONLY £210.00. Phone: Richard 0372 843668 between 5-9pm.

48K SPECTRUM lightpen, Currah Microspeech, Kempston interface, Quickshot joystick, software worth £400 (old and new). Also books and many mags. The lot worth £600, sell for £150. Phone: 04022 20843 ask for Simon Wright.

NEW HOME WANTED for friendly lovable microdrive and interface one. Fully house-trained, make ideal family pets. £40 ono. Phone: Vaci Koblizek on 0934 838182.

SPECTRUM PLUS TWO joystick, Kempston interface, 24 original games, including over 10 Smashes. All in perfect condition. Nick Kitchen, *20 Dewi Avenue, Holywell, Clwyd, North Wales CH8 7UG*. Tel: Holywell 713213. £130.

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SPECTRUM 1282 with built-in tape deck, joystick, guarantee, leads, mags and £500 worth of original software. Perfect condition £150 the lot. Tel: Andy on 0634 725848.

SPECTRUM 48K Epsom printer, joystick, interface and 25 games. All for only £100 ono. All in good condition. Tel: 01 639 3872 after 4pm and ask for Louis.

FOR SALE SPECTRUM 128K/2, joystick, thermal printer with paper, loads of software including *Starglider, The Great Escape, The Quill, G.A.C., 6-Pak* and *Ace*. Only £200. Tel: 0455 42145 after 4.30pm and ask for Gaz.

PRINTER SEIKOSHA GP-100A Mark II for sale. Very good condition plus Tasman Centronics interface £50 ono. Phone 01 368 7445 after 6pm. Ask for Jonathan.

FOR SALE SPECTRUM 2 with £300 of original software with joystick and converter. Only £150. Tel: Bath 891660 ask for Dominic Alford.

TROJAN LIGHTPEN with battery included. No interface needed, hardly used £15 or nearest offer. Will consider swap for printer or microdrive. Tel; 0942 725294 after 4.15pm as for Neil.

SPECTRUM, 23 games, tape recorder, interface 2, printer, Snapshot joystick, microdrive, interface 1 and 5 cartridges. Contact: Christopher Barnes on Workington 61703 after 5pm. Must collect.

FOR SALE a real bargain. Spectrum , Multiface 1, Quickshot joystick, data recorder, software titles worth over £300 including *G.A.C.* and *Revolution* etc. The lot for £90. Phone: Chris 01 724 0653.

FREE TWO GAMES on a 64K wafa if you buy my wafadrive for £60. It was £100, so it's a good deal. Phone: Matthew on 0566 84200 between 6pm and 10pm.

FOR SALE Sinclair Spectrum Plus 48K. In excellent condition with manual and packaging and latest software. Worth £110 will sell for £75. Tel Ferdose 01 368 4956.

SPECTRUM 1282 five months old. £350 worth of new software, also two joysticks. Worth £515, sell for £250. Phone Mat on 0342 25245 after 6.30pm.

SPECTRUM 48K, Quickshot II and Cheetah 125. Dual-port interface, tape recorder, light pen and £520 of games including *Barbarian, Death Wish 3* etc. £125 ono. Quick sale please. Tel: Adam 01 429 0777 after 6pm.

48K SPECTRUM rubber-keyed with Ram Turbo interface, joystick, several games including *Crystal Castles, Rambo* etc. Only £80. Phone: 01 561 6995 and ask for Daniel.

FOR SALE Interface One, Microdrive, 16 cartridges £35. *Quill* and *Illustrator* set unused £15. Musical keyboard software and book for 128K only £30. Phone: 0285 2201 ask for James.

EXPAND YOUR SPECTRUM mouse, wafadrive, 4 wafas, Alphacom 32 printer, £260 plus of software including *The Art Studio* and *Tasword II* worth £430. Sell for £120 ono. Phone: Kidsgrove 6430 after 4pm and ask for Paul. Buyer collects.

ZX SPECTRUM 128K, joystick interface, 240 original games including *Exolon, Zynaps, Joe Blade, Renegade, Wizball* and *Death Wish III* worth £400 sell for £300. Phone: Jon on 0329 43118 after 6pm.

FOR SALE SPECTRUM 128, cassette recorder, printer, joysticks, interface and software. All boxed in good condition, £250 ono. Also SpecDrum (for 48K Spectrum) £15. Contact: Jason after 5.30pm on 01 803 9019.

HARDWARE SWAP

SWAP MY *Athena* and £15 for Multiface 1 or 128. Ian Knowles, *150 Grove Green Road, Leytonstone, London E11 4EL*. Tel: 01 556 9147 after 4pm.

SPECCY 128 broke needs repairing. Will swap for, well you make an offer. Write to: Jimmy, *184 Armstrong Road, Benwell, Newcastle NE4 8QP*. I'll consider anything at all.

SWAP TEXAS INSTRUMENTS Language Translator. French and Spanish speech chips. Battery, mains adaptor, carry case plus Trojan lightpen for Videoface Digitiser. Tel: South Shields 4544477.

MY MULTIFACE 128 and wafadrive for your full size printer. Also swap Mouse and ZX-Printer. Offers to: Paul Cardall, *21 Darwin House, Alder Drive, C/Wood, Birmingham B37 7QE*. Mags wanted.

HARDWARE WANTED

WANTED SINCLAIR POCKET TV and Opus Discovery. Will pay cash or swap. Phone: 061 705 1271 weekends only and ask for Glen.

WANTED Printer and Interface. Must be 128K compatible. Swap for software. Write to: David Mennell, *72 Hemswell Avenue, Greatfield Estate, Hull HU9 5JZ*.

WANTED 128K SPECTRUM if possible, including joystick and interface and all your software, £90-£100. Phone: 0734 667943 and ask for Dan.

FREE REMOVAL OF unwanted 128K Spectrums. In fact I'll pay you! £60. What more can I say. Humberside area preferred. Contact: Andy Richardson, *45 Huntley Drive, Hull HU5 4DP*. Tel: 0482 442725.

HOMEGROWN SOFTWARE

FRUIT MACHINE ADDICTS save ££££s! Play Spectrum *Cashflow*, features large fruit sprites, nudges, holds, gamble and shuffle. Only £1.75 50p P&P. Matthew Edwards, *4 Club Lane, Barrow On Trent, Derby DE7 1HP*.

FREE POKES WHEN you send for free details of our five new addictive Spectrum games on one tape. Only £1.99! Robert Burgess, *1 Middlefield Road, Rotherham, S.Yorks S60 3JH*.

MCTRONICS 10 SHORT GAMES for £1.50 inc. P&P. Send cheque or P.O for £1.50 made payable to Brian McMahon, *7 Craigmore Park, Parkhall, 3 Antrim, Co.Antrim, N.Ireland BT41 1DR*.

PLOD the fun split-screen adventure (48K, 128K). Very quick dispatch, only 99p. Also *Football League* PBM. Please write for details of both to: JMC, *2 Little Acre, Longton, Preston, Lancs PR4 5AP*.

PBM

PBM GAME *Rugby League Challenge* can you win the league and cup double for more details send S.A.E to: Camelot Games, *1 Cae Ymryson, Caernarvon, Gwynedd, N.Wales LL55 2LR*.

FOR THE PRICE of a stamp you could have your own *Panzer!* computer moderated armoured warfare, in all it's glory. Send S.A.E to: *Panzer! 9 Huncote Road, Narborough, Leicester LE9 5GP*. QRY

***TROGON* IS A** fantasy/futuristic PBM. Free start-up, further turns cost 50p. If you are interested then write to: Rik Greaves, *Capel Lodge, Badsell Road, Five Oak Green, Kent TN12 6QY*.

WATCH OUT IN the coming months for details of *Phase II* and *Holocaust* play by mail games from Britain's brightest PBM company. Estimated release dates:- *Phase II* October 17th 1988 and *Holocaust* December 25th 1988. Tel: Maiden Newton 20755.

FREE PBM no money! First five players get an extra special planet in a super space conquest game. Send S.A.E to: Gary McCombie, *21 Mearns Drive, Stonehaven, Kincardineshire*.

PBM GAME *Street Fight*, no cost apart from postage. For a start up position, send a S.A.E to: Mark Day, *1 Cranwood Road, Tittensor, Stoke-On-Trent, Staffs ST12 9JE*.

PBM ADDRESSES send S.A.E and 18p stamp for A4 sheet of PBM games addresses and our ratings, football, sports, fantasy, RP, strategy etc. Patrick Walsh, *36 Verney Road, Langley, Slough, Berks, SL3 8NX*.

PBM *DOMAIN* wield power, crush thine enemies, for only £3 start-up and £1 a turn thereafter. For details send a S.A.E to: *Domain, Chadwell Mill, Chadwell, Nr. Newport, Shropshire TF10 9BG*.

PEN PALS

WANTED: PEN PAL male or female. Into *Jet Set Willy* or ladders and platform games. Write to: Well Ali, *4 Hornshill Farm Road, Stepps, Glasgow, Scotland G33 6DE*.

PEN PAL WANTED to swap games. Over 600 games to swap. Write to: Craig Eades, *23 Kilton Place, Pitsmoor, Sheffield S3 9LW*.

HI I'M JUSTIN I'm looking for a pen friend

from anywhere. I have over 300 games. I am 15. Write to: Justin Evans, *7A Bailey Bridge Road, Braintree, Essex CM7 5TT.*

FEMALE PEN FRIEND wanted. Between 14 and 16. Likes music, computers and films. Ian Parkinson, *19 Hayfell Avenue, Westgate, Morecambe, Lancs LA4 4TS.*

HUNKY 13-YEAR-OLD MALE seeks gorgeous female 12-14. Please include photo. Phil Ingham, *184 Elephant Lane, St. Helens, Merseyside WA9 5EL.* All letters answered. Get writing girls!

PEN PAL FROM USA wanted, over 18. I own a Spectrum and a Commodore 64. Adam Penn, *81 Turnpike Drive, Luton, Beds LU3 3RA.*

PEN PAL REQUIRED. Female if possible, aged 15/16. Would like to swap games, POKEs, maps etc. Write to: Andy Blackburn, *37 Redmire Close, Brandholme, Hull, Yorks HU7 5AG.* Tel: 0482 826018.

WANTED PEN PALS from all countries. I am 15, like playing adventures and own a Spectrum. Mary Scott, *19 Branksome Road, Norwich NR4 6SN.*

A THOUSAND PEN PALS needed for special CRASH pen-pals section in Issue 53 (on sale May 26). Use the classifieds form and get your name in to PEN PALS, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB* by May 3. Be there or be unwritten-to!

SOFTWARE SALES

113 TOP GAMES from *Academy* to *Zynaps*. All originals. Worth £835, sell for £299 ono. Quick Sale needed. Send a S.A.E for list to: Robin Cavill, *Woodleigh, 9 Woodville Road, Dewsbury, W.Yorks WF12 7BE.* Tel: 0924 466588.

SPECTRUM COMPUTER GAMES from £1.25 each. Many popular titles, over 60 to choose from. Send S.A.E for list to: Mike Stuart, *35 James Reckitt Avenue, Hull HU8 7TH.* Tel: 0482 708806.

SPECTRUM 48/128 SOFTWARE for sale. All new titles e.g. *Bubble Bobble*. Prices from 50p. Send S.A.E for free list to: R Dean, *49 Windmill Avenue, St.Albans, Herts AL4 9SJ.*

GAMES FOR SALE or swap. Includes *Sir Fred, Cyberun* and *Future Knight*. Want *Sam Fox Strip Poker, Antiriad, Sam Cruise, Saboteur II, Nosferatu* and *Tarzan*. Ring Ken on 0606 593985.

OVER 90 GAMES to sell. All originals. Send for price list (with stamp). First come first served. New and old games. Alan Livesey, *123 Carlton Road, Whalley Range, Manchester M16 8BE.*

FOR SALE low-priced Spectrum software, old and new, from £1. For price list write to: Mark Mottershead, *12 Linthurst Newtown, Blackwell, Bromsgrove, Worcs B60 1BP.*

80 ORIGINAL SPECTRUM games 50p to £3. Includes *Pub Games, Hard Guy, Miami Vice* etc. Or swap for hardware. Send S.A.E to: C Crofts, *168 Stoney Stanton Road, Coventry CV1 4FN.*

SOFTWARE SWAP

GAMES TO SWAP including, *Batman, Uridium, Scooby Doo, Sweevo's World, Academy, Cobra, Bazooka Bill* and others. Your list for mine. Howard Armitage, *11 Ashby Road, Breedon-on-the-Hill, Derby.*

VERA CRUZ AFFAIR with solution will swap for *Gremlins* or *The Never Ending Story*. Contact: Lee Pickering, 131 Queens Road, Blackburn, Lancs BB1 1QF.

WILL SWAP *Ghosts N Goblins, Great Escape, Nosferatu, Batman* or *Dragontorc*, for almost any Smash or *Renegade, 6-Pak 2* or *Exolon*. Contact: Daniel Andy or Jonathan 4pm to 5.30pm weekdays Tel: 01 550 6054.

WILL SWAP *Mario Bros, Aliens, Max Headroom, Super Bowl, Hydrofool, Gauntlet, Xevious* and more for any recent software. Please phone: 01 751 4162 after 3.30pm ask for Dean.

WILL SWAP *Glider Rider, Bobby Bearing* or *Paperboy* for *Top Gun, Forbidden Planet*, or *Spindizzy*. Write to: Tony Denny, *15 Wesel Avenue, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 8UA.*

GEOFF (THAT'S ME) will swap: *Elite, W.A.R, Avenger, TT Racer, Tomahawk, Head Over Heels, Fat Worm* and more. For most good games Phone: 0438 355407.

SEND YOUR LIST for mine to swap 48K games. I have *Barbarian, Ghosts N Goblins, Cobra, Bombjack*. Just write to: Mark Slade, *9 Sherringham Drive, Woodthorpe, York YO2 2SE.* Including S.A.E.

SWAP GREAT GAME, *Batty* – ex Your Sinclair. For working tape of CRASH sampler Issue 45, if one exists. Tel: 051 546 8848.

STRATEGY FAN WANTED swap your games for mine. Have *Vulcan, TFH, Austerlitz* and more. S.A.E please to: P Regan, *Redcraig Place, Mundole, Forres, Moray IV36 0JR.*

SOFTWARE EXCHANGE CLUB free membership. Exchange your unwanted originals cheaply. Send S.A.E for details and free membership to: On-Spec Software Exchange Club, *23 Florence Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5HR.*

WANTED *Chaos* in good condition with instructions. Will swap for *Rebelstar* or *Winter Games*. Rob Palmer, *64 Monkmoor Avenue, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY2 5EB.*

WANTED *PAW* and *GAC* – swap for many new games like *Exolon, Ranarama, Head Over Heels, Saboteur II, Killed Until Dead, Cobra, Aliens* and many more. Phone: Jason on 0762 336239 after 5pm.

SWAP ALL THREE of my games: *Nemesis, Jack the Nipper* and *Paperboy* for nay one of *Elevator Action, Wizball* or *Mario Bros*. Apply: G Berry, *3 The Chestnuts, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 3YN.*

I'M 14 YEAR OLD and I have over 200 games (Spectrum 48). I want to swap games with anyone in the world. I'll answer letters. Vangelis Handanos, *19 Patr, Loakim Str, Athens 10675, Greece.*

SOFTWARE TO SWAP, all new games to swap. Send your list for mine. Send to: Thomas Hartwich, *Rorlokken 15, 2730 Herlev, Denmark.*

SOFTWARE WANTED

WANTED *Formula One, The Biz* will swap *Zoids, Fourth Protocol, Finest Hour, Scalextric, Ballblazer* and *Dam Busters*. Steve Komor, *80 Graham Avenue, Penyfai, Bridgend, Mid Glam CF31 4NP.*

WANTED ORIGINAL COPY of *Lord of the Rings* for *Jetpac, Dictator* and *Hungary Horace* (originals). If interested please write to: Stuart Baker, *29A Brudenell Drive, Stoke Manderville, Bucks HP22 5UR.*

WANTED Stack Life Rifle software. Will pay very good prices. Write to: Jamie Malone, *43 Smeaton Road, Chigwell, Essex IG8 8BD.* Tel: 01 504 4231 6pm to 10pm weekdays.

WANTED *The Biz* by Virgin. Please state total cost or will swap for Crash No.1. Write to: Colin Bilton, *40 High Street, Misterton, Doncaster, S.Yorks DN10 4BU.*

WANTED *ALIEN* by Argus Press's Mind Games. Will pay up to a fiver. Must be in good condition. Ring Darren on 0706 76020 after 6pm.

WANTED *Rock 'N Wrestle* and other gaems. Have *Leader Board, Catch 23, Army Moves, Scooby* and *Vera Cruz*. Contact: Neil Connolly, *61 Maesglas, Llandovery, Dyfed SA20 0DN.* Tel: 0650 21003.

OTHERS

WANTED *Machine Code For The Absolute Beginner* book by Melbourne House. Must have all pages. Send your price, name and address to: Vin, *19 Croft Street, Morecambe, Lancs LA4 5SS.* Now!

LEGEND OF THE AMAZON WOMEN £5. Unplayed *Hampstead* £5. Wanted: Spectrum printer. Paul Walford, *89 Richmond Way, Newport Pagnell, Bucks MK16 0LQ.*

POKES for 50 latest, greatest games. On the tape ready to use, only £1.99 (cover costs). You get 6 monthly tapes, send money to: *SpecPOKE, 21 Chatham, Westwood Hill, East Kilbride, Glasgow.*

I NEED HINTS and tips on *Hampstead*. I also want a pen-pal aged 14-16, to swap games, POKEs etc. Please write to: Chris Evans, *5 Northeron West Cross, Swansea, SA3 5PT.*

MAPS, POKES, HINTS and tips. Pokes available on tape or printout. Multiface booklet out soon. Send a large S.A.E to: Doc Maps, *385 Duffield Road, Allestree, Derby DE3 2DN.*

HELP NEEDED ON these games please. *The Planets, JSW2* and *Odd Job Eddie*. Also has anyone got *Zombie Zombie*. Swap or cash, I really don't mind. Phone: 01 898 3062 ask for Ant.

If your ad isn't featured this month, don't despair! We'll do our best to get it in ASAP ono (as they say in classifieds), and if the worst comes to the worst (which it hasn't for two months now, but we're still waiting) you can always send the ad in again. Don't forget to fill out the whole form, give unflinching obedience to the small print below, and **USE BLOCK CAPITALS!** (Otherwise the worst could come to the worst.)

1 Individuals and small organisations such as fanzines and homegrown-software publishers are welcome to use the CRASH classifieds, but professional businesses cannot. Paid-for classifieds for businesses will probably be introduced soon.

2 Classified ads should not be more than 30 words long (numbers, postcodes etc count as one word each), and should be written in the boxes provided; there is no box-number service, so **YOUR AD COPY MUST INCLUDE YOUR ADDRESS AND/OR PHONE NUMBER.**

3 Classified ads must be submitted on a CRASH classifieds form, or a photocopy of the form.

4 Absolutely no ads for selling or swapping pirated software or which encourage software piracy will be accepted.

5 CRASH reserves the rights to edit, publish and not publish classified ads without reference to the advertiser, and the magazine is not liable for any loss caused to advertisers through their own wording of ad copy or the appearance or nonappearance of ads.

6 If you send an ad in PLEASE don't ring us up asking when it's going to be published – we'll just print as many in each issue as we can (the worst coming to the worst notwithstanding).

I WANT A FREE CRASH CLASSIFIED!

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

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This offer is subject to availability and closes on February 27 1988. Subscriptions ordered by February 3 will start with Issue 50. Subscriptions ordered between February 3 and February 27 will start with Issue 51.

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ROBIN CANDY'S SCORES

IT'S finally arrived. The health inspectors have finally closed down Lloyd Mangram's notorious Hall Of Slime, and here's ROBIN CANDY with **SCORES** – a monthly game-by-game list showing the whole range of scores on the very latest games (so *Jet Set Willy* record-breakers are out from the word go!).

Each month there'll be the top score so far received for each game – first under the game heading – and then a couple of others so you can measure yourself against not only interface-burners but ordinary mortals too.

And each month there'll be five winners picked at random (insofar as anything in the universe is truly 'random' – our every action affects the 'structure' of 'being' with a concatenation of 'cause', 'effect', 'cause', 'effect' which some are pleased to call 'coincidence') from all the entries received, regardless of whether they're printed or not.

The first entry drawn each month will win £40 of software of the winner's choice plus a CRASH cap and T-shirt, and four runners-up will receive CRASH caps and T-shirts too; so don't forget to tell us on the form what software and T-shirt you'd like if you do win.

Finally, the management apologise for the extremely confusing **SCORES** entry form in Issue 46, which was the result of that endless cosmic concatenation of 'cause', 'effect', 'cause', 'effect' we call 'technical reasons'.

Now read on . . .

BATTY
Elite

Simon Auger, Canvey Island, Essex — 1654075
Tommy Green, Mitcham — 51180
Andrew Mcmurdo, Ashington, Northumberland — 117350

BOMBJACK
Elite

Jonathan Ridehalgh, Markfield — 625950
Paul Morris, Southport — 203790
Jason Guest, Dudley — 500290

BUBBLE BOBBLE
Firebird

Jake Flewin, London NW — 1500000
Paul Reeves, Bournemouth — 587000
Daniel Goulden, Reading — 211000

DEATH WISH 3
Gremlin Graphics

Tommy Green, Mitcham — 187000
Dawn Mells, Sidcup — 99730
S D King, Wincanton — 48905
Paul Morris, Southport — 117300

ENDURO RACER
Activision

Philip Rees, Chipping Norton — 2224458
Stuart Whapples, Harrogate — 1795068
Sam Spundlow, Worksop — 21100

EXOLON
Hewson

Paul Tinsley, Pill — 943200
Ian Reid, Reigate — 55470
Michael Turner, Stoke Gabriel, Devon — 558100

FREDDY HARDEST
Ocean

Derek Henny, Fife — 568200
Paul Calvert, Peterlee, Durham — 153400

GAUNTLET
US Gold

Miguel Nunes, Torquay — 12497494
Paul Morris, Southport — 101990
David Port, Liversedge, West Yorkshire — 936822

RENEGADE
Ocean

Niall Lecoustre, Preston — 1111187
Daniel Mattsson, Bornholm, Denmark — 45960
Iain Rigby, Blackburn — 139250

WIZBALL
Ocean

Paul Rooks, Washington — 238920
Alan Mcgroajy, Doune, Perthshire — 12480
Nicholas Tellis, Harrow — 8320

ZYNAPS
Hewson

David Fort, Liversedge — 163725
Dave Mortimer, Bristol — 87950
Michael Wright, Walsall — 41900

SEND ME YOUR SCORES

Send this form (or a copy) with your scores for up to three games to **ROBIN CANDY'S SCORES, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*.** Only genuine scores will be accepted; any improbably huge scores (68715290 in *Exolon*, ha!) will be immediately binned and the sender will be forced to listen to The Art Of Noise – a fate worse than sharing a desk with Lloyd Mangram.

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ADDRESS ....

....

.... **POSTCODE** ....

MY SCORES ARE:

	GAME	SCORE	DATE ACHIEVED
1			
2			
3			

IF A WIN TOP PRIZE I WOULD LIKE THIS £40 WORTH OF SOFTWARE:

....

AND IF I WIN ANY PRIZE I WOULD LIKE THIS CRASH T-SHIRT, CHOSEN FROM THOSE ADVERTISED ON PAGE 82: ....

....

The decision of CRASH's appointed judges is absolutely final in all respects, insofar as anything in an expanding universe can be 'final'

PREVIEW

Coming soon to a Spectrum near you!

HEAVY ON THE TIE-INS

IF arcade tie-ins are what you remember 1987 for, get ready for another similar year. **US Gold**'s new and innovative **GO!** label, launched last summer, starts the year where it left off, announcing a major new licensing deal with arcade giant Capcom. This means ten new Capcom games on your Spectrum over the next 15 months.

The first half of 88 will see Spectrum releases of the violent arcade games ***Street Fighter***, ***Tiger Road***, ***Black Tiger*** and ***1943***.

And despite GO!'s arcade prominence US Gold hasn't forgotten the street games itself. The latest Data East conversion, ***Shackled***, gives you 112 levels of shoot-'em-up fun. Rescue your mates from the depths of the dungeons, and then use them to get you out! Should be out mid-February . . .

Also from US Gold is ***Lazer Tag***, set 1,022 years in the future. Six levels of (more) action-packed shoot-'em-up fun. Tag your opponents before they get you. Definitely for those with a sharp eye and fast reflexes, *Lazer Tag* is set for release a while after *Shackled*.

Further in the future are ***Infiltrator II*** (the original *Infiltrator* was reviewed in CRASH Issue 35, earning 72% Overall) and ***Gun Smoke***.

► **Musical Marvel: GO! commissioned rock band Resister to provide new tracks for five of the US Gold offshoot's games.**
Captain America In The Doom Tube Of Dr Megalomann **(whew!) features** *Who's Crying Now* **– and there'll be tears all round if you can't defeat the evil Dr Megalomann in this far-fetched arcade adventure based on the Marvel comic character.**



ARNIE MOVES

Film tie-ins became bigger and better in 1987, and **Activision** intends to continue this trend in 88. ***Predator***, based on the film starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, should be available now.

Game follows film closely. You take Arnie's part – you're a member of a crack commando unit and you're sent out to rescue allies captured by Latin American guerrillas. Sadly by the time you get there they've all been given the chop. Understandably you feel a bit narked and set out to avenge the killings. And just as in the film you are kitted out with all sorts of deadly weapons to complete your £9.99 mission.

Also coming from Activision for the same price is (another) board-game tie-in, ***September***. Get from one end of the board to the other, using a whole variety of shapes – if you must!

M-M-M-M-M-M-MISSED POINT

Cascade Games has two interesting releases up its collective sleeve, and first off is another tie-in. ***19 Part 1 – Boot Camp*** ties in with the popular Paul Hardcastle Number One chart hit. Ignoring the point of the song (which was to shock everyone at how young the American combat soldiers were in the Vietnam war – the average age was 19), Cascade has based the first part of the game on the training of a young recruit.

The programmers even went to a training camp on the Yorkshire moors to see what a 'grunt' (foot soldier) has to go through.

And then there's, dare we say it, another in the long line of *Breakout* clones – ***Trax***. For those that get bored quickly Trax includes a screen-construction set for that extra bit of fun.

Gremlin Graphics has three little beauties waiting to be unleashed upon an unsuspecting public (so we'll warn you about them first). First off we have the strategy adventure, ***Blood Valley***, based on the Duelmaster series of fantasy books.

Then, following smartly in its footsteps at the end of February, comes ***VENOM Strikes Back***, the third in the MASK series. This time, though, you have none of your MASK vehicles – you must steal a rocket and penetrate the VENOM base to rescue your son, Scott Tracker. And don't forget to eradicate the evil Miles Mayhem who kidnapped him in the first place.



Lastly from Gremlin Graphics comes ***Northstar***. You know that highly-classified operation that went completely wrong and overpopulated the world, and then the space station that was built by the four Earthlords? Well, there's a bit of a problem.

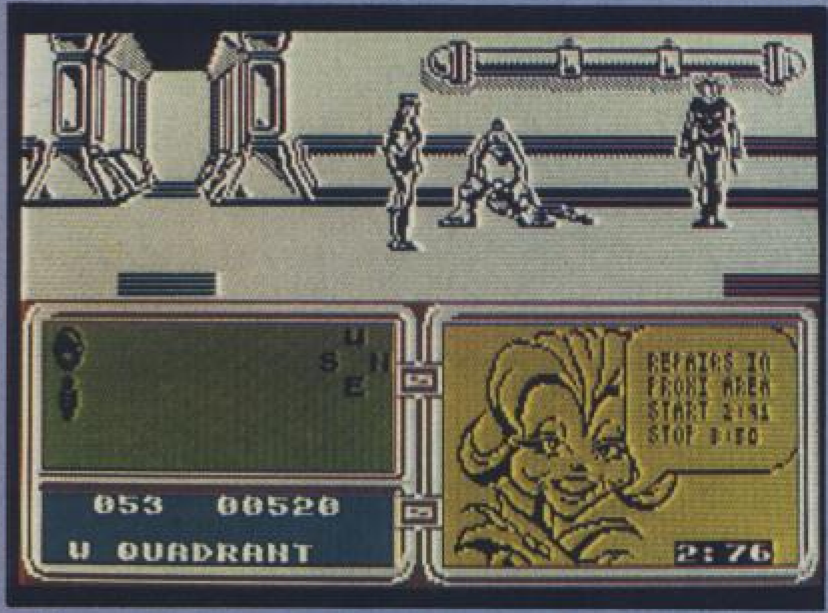
The space station has been invaded by aliens and the life-support systems have been turned off (thus killing a few thousand people).

Now it's up to you and your robotic implants to jolly well go and turn them back on again. You have till March to get yourself together.

Whispers of ***Mickey Mouse*** have also been heard from the Gremlin Graphics offices . . .

HALLO HALO

Halo Jones, that 50th-century women on the Hoop (it's where all American's unemployed live then), is the subject of **Piranha**'s next *2000AD* game. As you can imagine the Hoop is full of all kinds of dangerous, desperate, deformed, delirious and disillusioned down-and-outs,and even the most innocent shopping trip can turn into a battle for survival. ►



▶ ***Dangerous delirium:*** *2000AD* **fantasy in Piranha's** *Halo Jones*



▶ **Thoughtful tie-in: Ocean's** *Platoon* **is based on the antiwar Vietnam film**

So get your armour-plated carrier bags ready for the March release of ***Halo Jones***.

Also to watch out for from Piranha, but much later in the year, is a story of witches and the darkest evil, ***Coven The Arcade Computer Game*** (Long Pointless Tiles Of Our Time: 17 in a series of 2.5 million).

And there's still ***Roy Of The Rovers***, based on the escapades of the well-known real-life (they say . . .) Melchester football star.

As if Freescape and cola weren't enough, **Digital Integration** is always trying to give us 'the real thing'. So the company's next two releases are both simulations.

In fact, ***ATF*** (it stands for Advanced Tactical Fighter) simulates 'the real thing' before it's even been designed and built. If you thought you had your hands full in Digital Integration's *Tomahawk* (Issue 23, 93%) just wait till you see the baby you'll be handling (or trying to handle) in *ATF*. The Lockheed YF-22A is one of the most advanced planes you could want to load into your computer.

The screen in Digital Integration's computer cockpit shows a much more realistic landscape than previous flight simulators, enhanced by solid 3-D display. You travel over land and sea, using your onboard radar to pinpoint likely targets.

ATF should be flying into your area in the next couple of weeks, so keep your heads down!

Rumour has it that ***TT Racer II*** is also being planned by Digital Integration (*TT Racer* earned 78% in Issue 34), but no firm release date has been set.

ARKANOID SEQUEL

Ocean starts the new year where it left the old one – with another bunch of interesting licences ready for release. Coin-op and film tie-ins are set for the end of January – ***Rastan Saga*** and ***Platoon*** (like Cascade's *19* licence, a Vietnam game).

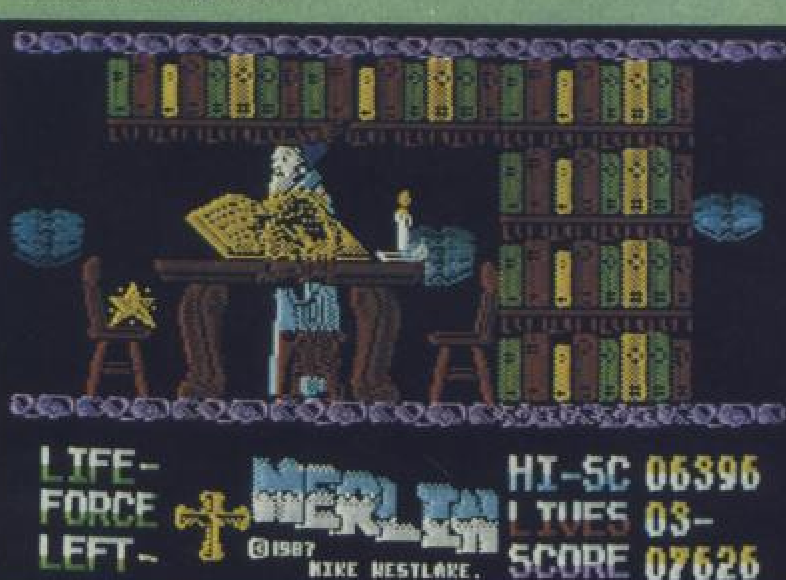


▶ *Platoon*

By the end of February Ocean should be ready with ***Arkanoid – Revenge Of Doh***, another (!) *Breakout* clone from the arcade machine; and *Victory Road*, very much in the *Ikari Warriors* vein.

But we still haven't seen ***Ikari Warriors*** from **Elite**, which also promises ***Buggy Boy*** 'soon'.

▶ **Magic in Camelot: simple collecting-'em-up and an ancient Arthurian setting in Firebird's budget** *Merlin*



Electronic Arts is planning to start releasing Spectrum titles soon – none have been seen yet, but this month's promises are ***Sky Fox II***, ***Power At Sea*** and ***Strike Fleet***.

Those who've already completed *Mercenary* (Issue 44, 96%) will be glad to hear that ***Damocles – Mercenary II*** is being converted to the not-so-humble Spectrum. And if you saw *Mercenary* you'll know that the Spectrum will probably have the best 8-bit version of the sequel too. But don't expect it soon – they take things pretty easy down at **Novagen**'s base in Brum.

If you like the look of this issue's Adventure Trail Smash *Knight Orc* (92% on page 45%), watch out for **Rainbird**'s next three releases. ***Jinxter*** and ***Legend Of The Sword*** are the next two adventures to be let out of the Telecomsoft dungeons.

And Rainbird hasn't forgotten its Issue 36 Smash *Starglider* either – coming soon is ***Carrier Command***, a sort of *Starglider* at sea.

OUT RUN RIVAL

As the new year gets on its way, so do the new software houses, and the well-known French programming team **Titus** has now set up its own publishing house. Titus's first game, ***Crazy Cars***, is already selling surprisingly well in 16-bit formats, and indeed it's along the same lines as US Gold's sales star *Out Run*.

Ever fancied owning a Mercedes, a Porsche 911, perhaps Lamborghini Countach or even a Ferrari? In *Crazy Cars* you're racing between Florida and Malibu in a selection of high-performance cars, all for just £9.95 including delivery and number plates. The first Spectrum copies should arrive mid-February.

Another French connection .... *page 8*
Platoon subscription offer .... *page 106*

DON'T END UP EMPTY-HANDED – WIN A SUPER MATSUI VX 735 VIDEO RECORDER FROM SYSTEM 3 AND IK+



Crash Competition

A NEW KARATE GAME

The traditional arts of unarmed combat have always been most prevalent in the Far East – and nowhere more than in Japan, where the fabled karate has become more a way of life than just a way of self-defence.

And the martial arts have always been rich with opportunities for the film, coin-op and computer-game industries – stories of young men battling for the pride of a pretty maiden.

It all started with Bug Byte's Kung Fu (karate it may not have been, but it sure was inspiration for later games like Melbourne House's The Way Of The Exploding Fist).

And now the latest in the line, System 3's IK+, proves the genre is still running strong over three years later. (See the Smash review on page 88 for more information – CRASH cross-reference minion).

LOOK MA, NO HANDS – THE MATSUI VIDEO

What better for System 3 to give away in this karate comp than a video recorder for those cheapo chop-'em-up films?

But the Matsui VX 735 is no simple recorder that your mum could operate – you'll need to be pretty clever to work out the loads of knobs that need twiddling and buttons that need pressing.

There's an extended-play function which allows you to record with the tape at half speed and thus get twice as much time for your money, and a high-quality picture created by advanced microchip technology – the things they can do nowadays!

LITERALLY, 'karate' means 'empty hand' – but thanks to **System 3** and its karate-choppin' Smash ***IK+* we've got a smart Matsui VX 735 video recorder** and **21 games** to hand to you.

All you have to do (as they say in all good comps) is make as many **words of seven letters of more** as you can out of the game's name – 'International Karate Plus'.

In each word you can only use each letter as many times as it actually appears in that phrase.

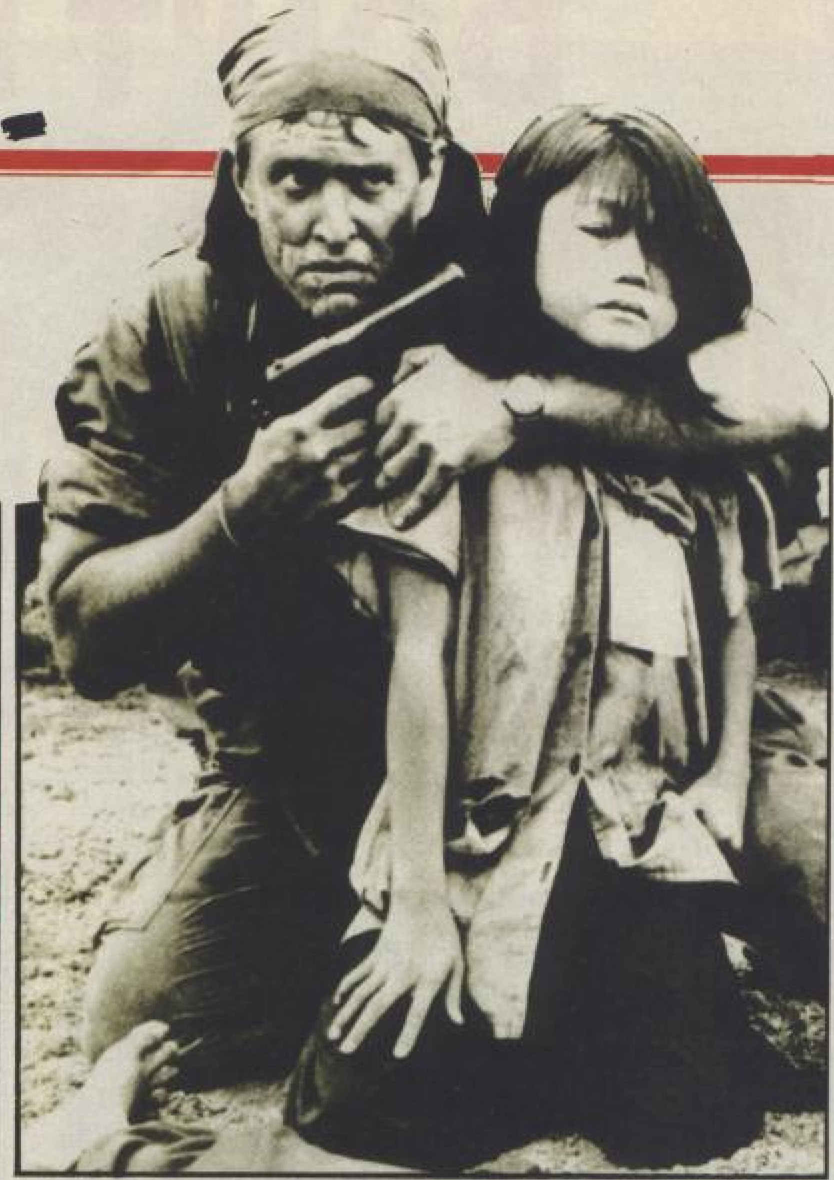
The **winner** will be the person who sends in the longest list of words which are, in the opinion of CRASH's judges, genuine words (names of people, places etc will not be counted). He'll receive the Matsui video recorder and a copy of *IK+*.

The **20 runners-up** will be those who submitted the 20 next-longest lists, and will each receive a copy of *IK+*.

Send your answers on a sheet of paper with your name and address to **A SMASHING COMP WITH SYSTEM 3, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.***

Entries must be received by **March 8** and the decision of CRASH's appointed judges is final in all respects.

ET AL



GOGGLE!

NEW YEAR, NEW VIDEOS . . .

AFTER last month's pessimistic view of the Christmas TV schedules it was good to see the BBC do reruns of some great black-and-white film classics, albeit at nigh on midnight – films like *12 Angry Men*. And the crying shame is that most of them are very hard to get on video!

But don't despair – the video companies are promising more titles and a quicker transition from film to video for this year.

Ready and waiting for release on February 4 **is Nelson Entertainment**'s ***The Whistle Blower***. Starring Michael Caine and Nigel Havers (*Chariots Of Fire*), this story about the government's real-life secret communications centre in Cheltenham proved surprisingly successful in the cinemas, especially in the States.

RCA/Columbia has an exciting line-up for the end of February – ***Blind Date*** and ***Haunted Honeymoon***.

The former stars Bruce Willis (*Moonlighting*), in his first big-screen starring role, with the bubbly and uncontrollable Kim Basinger (*9½ Weeks, No Mercy*) in a story where everything that can go wrong does.

Haunted Honeymoon is cowritten and directed by its star, Gene Wilder, and puts a whole collection of weird and possessed people in the same house for the night. Wilder and companion Gilda Radner (who appeared with him in *The Woman In Red*) have to last the night of terror – they're getting married in the morning! Also starring the hilarious Dom DeLuise (*The Cannonball Run I* and *II*), it looks like one of the funniest films of the February releases.

On the shelves now should be **MGM/UA**'s ***Walk Like A Man***, a madcap adventure starring Christopher Lloyd (*Back To The Future*) and Howie Mandel. All good clean fun . . .

But if all you want is good clean fun be sure to avoid **New World Video**'s next release, *Hellraiser*. It's a good old-fashioned British horror film, but with amazingly advanced make-up and visual effects. This was one of the most popular British films in the US last year, so be sure not to miss it.

Another gory one, ***Friday The 13th Part IV: Jason Lives***, comes out on February 19. You've got **CIC Video** to thank for that!

Arnold Schwarzenegger's *Predator* has been a huge box-office hit (and will be an Activision game) – and the first week of February brings his next video, ***Raw Deal*** from **CBS/Fox**. Nobody gives Arnie a raw deal, so you'd better pop out for it now.

Rank Video releases ***Firewalker***, the latest from Chuck Norris (*Missing In Action*), but it's probably not worth walking over hot coals for that one.

The second of Steven Spielberg's ***Amazing Stories*** should be out on February 5 from **CIC Video**. This one has Danny De Vito (as director and actor) and Gregory Hines (*The Cotton Club, White Nights, Running Scared*).

Also from CIC Video comes the impressive ***Children Of A Lesser God***, a story of the relationship between the hearing William Hurt and the deaf (in the film AND offscreen) Marlee Matlin (who won an Oscar for her performance). It's a romantic, sensitive story not to be missed by the discerning film buff.

Ocean video move .... *page 8*

PLATOON

RCA/Columbia Pictures 15

A VIETNAM VETERAN and winner of the Bronze Star himself, *Platoon* director Oliver Stone (who also directed *Salvador*) had no problems conveying the horror and heartache of the war the America could never win. *Platoon* is Stone's own story of his life in the war told through the eyes of foot soldier Chris Taylor, played by Charlie Sheen (*Lucas, The Wraith*).

In a series of letters to his grandmother Taylor tells of his term in the platoon. 'A new guy's life isn't worth so much, he hasn't put his time in,' he scrawls on a rain-sodden piece of paper. 'If you're gonna get killed in the Nam, it's better to get it in the first few weeks, the logic being you don't suffer so much.'

The platoon in which this raw recruit is placed has two leaders. On the one hand you have the relaxed pot-smoking clan under the leadership of Sergeant Elias (Willem Dafoe), with whom Taylor creates a strong relationship; and on the opposite side (but fighting the same enemy) Barnes, an aggressive and hard-headed Sergeant who stands for no nonsense, especially not from some rich new boy.

Nobody knows the real point of the war – 'it's all politics, man, politics' – and all that's sure is that *if* they get out of this mess they'll never forget it.

Platoon follows this group of men through their times in the war – storming villages, killing innocent civilians ('Did you see that head come apart? I ain't seen brains like that before . . . ') and, of course, always plodding through the muddy, overgrown jungle. And the constant fighting between Elias and Barnes continues. Will the soldiers survive their own rivalries, more destructive than their enemies?

Platoon scooped the top prizes at last year's Academy Award ceremony winning Best Picture, Best Director, Best Editing and Best Sound. And in Oliver Stone's next film, *Wall Street*, Charlie Sheen returns with Michael Douglas in a tough and timely story of insider dealing – set miles from Vietnam, but exposing the dark side of human nature in the same way as *Platoon*.

DOMINIC HANDY **94%**

***Platoon's been overrated – it's beautifully shot and impressively atmospheric, with some disturbing scenes of violence against the innocent, but suffers from a surfeit of obvious philosophising. Barnes is a monster, Charlie Sheen's character an angel; and director Stone veers dangerously close to giving us* Tom Grunt's Schooldays.**

It's not as if we need to be TOLD that war is dehumanising – what we need now is a new way of saying it, a way that will reach the generation to which most CRASH readers belong. We were still toddling when the Americans abandoned Vietnam.

Oliver Stone's impeccable self-indulgence is an enjoyable film, but don't let them tell you it's the ultimate statement on anything but the way 20-year-old passions can deteriorate into all the clichés of the antiwar genre.

BARNABY PAGE **65%**



► **More than just Madonna:** *Who's That Girl*

WHO'S THAT GIRL

Warner Home Video .... PG

SHE'S BACK! Forget that miscast in *Shanghai Surprise* – the lady of the Eighties, Madonna, is back to her old tricks. Playing general fun-loving and wacky youngster Nikki Finn in *Who's That Girl*, she gets into the worst trouble imaginable – she gets framed for murder.

Not surprisingly, when the sprightly mite gets out after four years in the slammer (the original title of the film was *The Slammer*, incidentally), the first thing she sets out to do is to clear her name and catch the real murderer of her ex-boyfriend.

But it's not that easy – she doesn't know where to start looking, and some Filofax-toting businessman has come to escort her from prison to her home. Young attorney Loudon Trott, played by the talented Griffin Dunne (*An American Werewolf In London, After Hours*), has his day all set out and nobody's going to put him off his timetable – or are they?

After all, he's not dealing with any old dumb blonde here. Nikki Finn's on a mission – 'together,' she exclaims, 'we're a lean, mean fighting machine'. But the last thing Trott wants is to be dragged around the city on the day before his wedding!

Nikki finally persuades him to give her a few lifts (in his future mother-in-law's Rolls Royce) here and there, but unfortunately he doesn't know what he's letting himself in for – Nikki's on no Christmas shopping trip, she's after murderers.

If I mention that on their travels they encounter a rare cougar named Murray, wreck a jewellery shop and (of course) smash up the Rolls you understand that this is going to be quite a change in the lifestyle of Loudon Trott. And there's that wedding to attend!

I can't understand why there was such criticism of this when it was released in the USA. What you've got here is one of the wackiest and funniest comedies of the year, bringing back memories of the Doris Day/Cary Grant days. And, as in all his previous films, Griffin Dunne looks suitably bemused by the whole situation.

Anybody who expects to see more than a light-hearted screwball comedy will be disappointed – but you'll be surprised how good *Who's That Girl* is.

DOMINIC HANDY **75%**

Most people who watch Who's That Girl *are going to do so because of Madonna – but there's a good deal more to it than that. It's much more enjoyable than* Shanghai Surprise, *and there are good performances all round. It's a pity Griffin Dunne is so overshadowed by the superstar, because he does an excellent job –* Who's That Girl *has more than Madonna cult appeal.*

MIKE DUNN **78%**

STREET JUSTICE

Guild Home Video 18

AMERICAN AGENT Curt Flynn (Michael Ontkean – *Death Wish II, Slap Shot*) is thought to have been shot down behind the Iron Curtain. The State Department quickly 'buries' him and destroy all evidence of his existence, but 12 years later he eventually escapes from the Eastern-bloc prison where he has been held and returns to the States.

As soon as he arrives he's thrown into a maximum-security prison (not a very warm welcome for a dead man!). But even this tough jail cannot hold him and he escapes in great style with the help of a stolen helicopter and many special effects.

Government agents are hot on his tail so Flynn dumps the helicopter and heads for his home town – to find that the last 12 years have changed the place, his wife (Joanna Kern – TV's *Hill Street Blues*) has remarried and his old neighbourhood is now a shopping centre.

This is where the story line flops: Flynn just goes around the town helping out people who are getting beaten up by the police and generally being very hard. *Street Justice* starts well, but eventually you're begging for the end.

NICK ROBERTS **78%**

Michael Ontkean portrays Curt Flynn superbly – he's the sort of guy who could squash the A-Team with one hand, but doesn't want to be so violent. And that's where the film scores so highly. Flynn's predicament is so well expressed that you feel like kicking in every punk that appears onscreen. The only problem with this very involving film is the very abrupt ending.

DOMINIC HANDY **73%**

COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS

Some 'netters still write letters . . . PAUL EVANS answers your comms questions

LOOKING FOR A DUTCH TREAT

Dear Paul
I'm a new CRASH subscriber, and my first subscription issue featured your new column about Micronetting. I still have my 48K Spectrum, but I also have a 128K machine.

Encouraged by a colleague, I purchased a VTX 5000 for 95 guilders (less than £30) including user-to-user software, only to find that my 128K Spectrum would not initialise as they are not compatible. I got my money back without any trouble and set about finding a modem that would work. I was able to find a shop that sold a modem that plugs into the built-in RS232 socket on the Spectrum and Prestel-type software to go with it.

It's a Miracle systems autodial modem with 1200/75 and 1200/1200 options. It can also be plugged into a QL with which it does autodial. It should be possible to autodial by toggling DTR at 10Hz to simulate the pulses of a telephone dialling, but the software does not provide for this facility.

Do you have a routine for doing this, and could you give more information about the Spectre Comms ROM for the VTX? What does it do that the VTX ROM doesn't?

As it happens I wrote to Ceefax's NEXT department last week asking for tips on making my modem autodial, but I don't know whether they'll be able to publish a solution.

I subscribe to Viditel, the Dutch equivalent of Prestel, and regularly log-in to a number of other data banks which work with the Prestel protocol. As yet I have not been able to communicate user-to-user for lack of a suitable program.

I am reluctant to go out and buy one at my local shop (Spectrum software stockists are few and far between over here) as the programs are too expensive to experiment with. My Prestel software cost me £20! And I'm sure there must be better programs available with off-line editing of pages etc. Can you publish a list of programs, facilities, prices and suppliers?

One interesting data bank is run by a schoolboy in Rotterdam, who turned his VTX 5000 into an autoanswer modem and runs the bank on a microdrive cartridge! The online times are rather erratic, but are published in another databank in Rotterdam.
Philip Green, Rotterdam, Holland

It's a shame you didn't pursue a solution to the 128K/VTX problem (see CRASH Issue 45) – £30 is quite cheap for a new VTX. You have not mentioned the Miracle modem model but it sounds like a WS2000. I haven't a clue how to program the RS232 port of the 128 to autodial through the modem, but maybe Simon N Goodwin can help there.

See my article in Issue 46 for details on the Spectre Comms ROM. Its software is a great deal better than the VTX's and it makes the VTX compatible with the 128 as well!

As for software, very cheap U2U software and enhanced terminal software is available on Micronet as telesoftware for the VTX only. If you can't log-on to Micronet, contact the people there and ask if you can purchase the software through snail-mail. Their address is: Micronet 800, Telemap Ltd, Durrant House, 8 Herbal Hill, London EC1R 5EJ.

Trying to get comms software commercially for the Spectrum is VERY difficult and I wouldn't bother trying! But a feature on the amazing software extras for the VTX is coming soon and will put the Beeb owners to shame . . .
PE

TELEX TALK

Dear Paul
Can I use telex numbers on a VTX 5000 modem or do I need add-ons, where can I get them from and how much will they cost me?

And can you please give me a few addresses so I can get more information about modems, telexes and networks. Also, is there a mail-order company I can get them from?

It would be nice to know a few things about programming techniques, but all the manuals and books I've seen are all far too technical for me. They just go on about all these weird things and ask you to do exercises that they don't tell you how to do or how it works and I'm usually completely lost after ten or 15 pages.

Is there a clear programming guide you know of that even a complete moron (me?) could follow easily?
Tony Redmond, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire

If you are a member of Prestel you have access to its much-improved telex service. You type in your message as you would a mailbox, enter the telex number etc, and the message is delivered in as little as three minutes! The cost is only 50p per telex.

There's no other way of converting a VTX to a telex machine.

If you need more information on the world of modems, contact Micronet at the address in my answer to Philip Green's letter.
PE

WINNERS & PRIZES

DRILLER THRILLER

THE Incentive/CRASH *Driller* competition run in Issue 42 had a few interesting entries. Best of the effects came from **Andrew Williams** of Solihull near Birmingham. He's already spent his £300 on a colour telly and a couple of microdrives. The lucky runner-up who, like Andrew, receives a credit in last issue's Smash *Driller* was **Liegh Haynes** of Scartho, Grimsby. Now back to the usual dimensions . . .

STRANGE BUT DISGUSTINGLY TRUE!

THE smelliest, dirtiest, most disgusting competition ever run by CRASH appeared a couple of issues back. All you had to do was create a story line for the famous King Grub and his faithful flies, to appear in artist Markie Kendrick's monthly CRASH cartoon strip. Markie picked out **Richard Burton** of Helston, Cornwall TR12 6RB, who'll get his script used in King Grub.

Richard will also receive the signed and framed original Grubby artwork of his idea and, like the five runners-up, a King Grub T-shirt. Those runners-up are: **Mark Soutar**, Angus, Scotland DD8 4HS; **David Garnett**, Finedon, Northants NN9 5GH; **Stuart Highley**, Keyworth, Notts NG12 5LQ; **Pierre Scotney**, Portishead, Bristol BS20 8QB; and **Glen Parson**, Southsea, Hants, PO5 4JE.

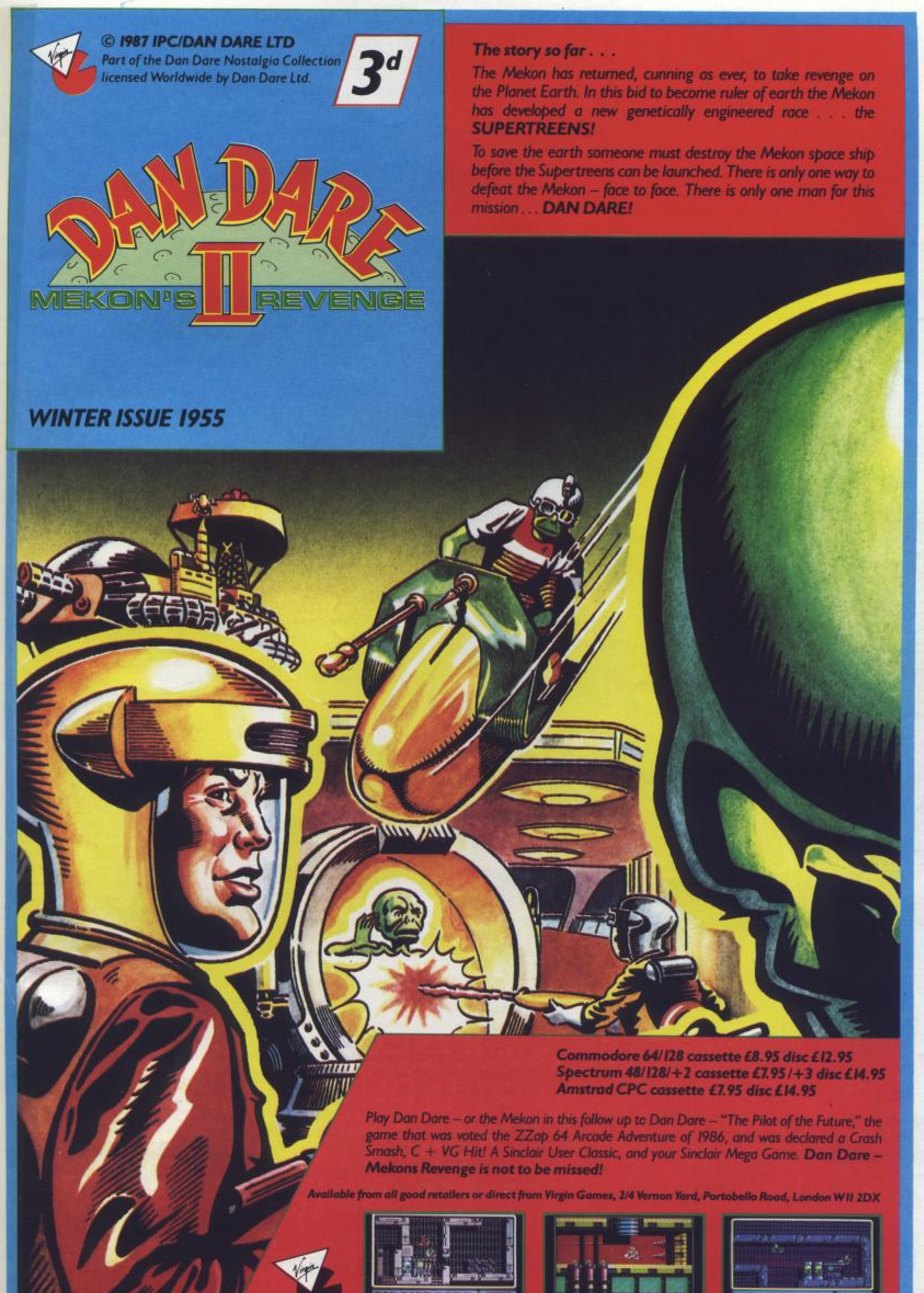
LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT
Issue 47

First prize in Gremlin Graphics's *Deflektor/MASK II* competition is LJN's Photon Double Warrior Set. **Graeme Hansford** of Broadstone, Dorset BH18 8LP tracked a laser beam accurately around the *Deflektor* diagram and wins that classy light-tag system plus copies of the two Gremlin Graphics games.

45 runners-up each receive copies of the games and a MASK ring binder . . .
Thomas Hayes, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX3 0HZ; Paul Dixon, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S73 9PT; W P Edwards, London SW16 8EZ; R Powell, Poole, Dorset; Martin Graham, Glasgow, Scotland G66 5HS; Sarah Francis, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV6 8AL; Paul Robson, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG20 0HX; Neil Parfitt, Norwich, NR10 3HF; Ian Ovenstone, Gorleton, Norfolk NR31 6TW; Michael Cleaver, Bristol, Avon BS5 8QR; Paul Kirkwood, Glasgow G43 1SX; Jerome Kringle, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 1LJ; Stephen Rees, Barry, South Glamorgan CF6 7NU; James Green, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 5HS; Christopher Jones, Coventry, CV4 9DW; Sam Morgan, Pontcanna, Cardiff CF1 9JS; Thomas Hoskin, Lechlade, Glos GL7 3DL; Daniel Houghton, Bolton, Lancs BL1 4LW; Robert Sheppard, Ashtead, Surrey KT21 1QY; William Anthes, Weymouth, Dorset DT3 4EH; John Lewis, Swansea, W.Glamorgan SA2 9LU; Nicholas White, Tonbridge, Kent TN10 3RA; Warren Camm, Keighley, West Yorks BD22 6DY; Mark Jones, Gosport, Hants PO13 9SB; Joel Byrne, Shipley, West Yorkshire BD17 6RW; William Masters, Clwyd, North Wales LL21 0RW; Stuart Moody, Southampton, SO1 3RA; David Robson, Wetherby, West Yorkshire LS22 4LF; Mark Rimmer, Southport, Merseyside PR8 4RE; Anthony Royle, Trafford, Cheshire M33 2SF; Peter Whelerton, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS6 0EW; Simon Bennett, Stokes Bishop, Bristol BS9 1AD; Mikhail Polshaw, Pendlebury, Manchester; Alistair Wallace, Stirling, Scotland FK7 7PN; Matthew Armitage, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD5 8ET; Christopher Morris Reed, Wokingham, Berks RG11 IP5; Nils Andenaes, London SW15 6HJ; David Hutchinson, Carlin How, Cleveland TS13 4DZ; Paul Phythian, Levenshulme, Manchester M19 2SU; Carl Vickers, Gwynedd LL31 9LP; Gary Montier, London SK17 2RT; Heath Greville, Ivybridge, South West Devon PL21 0TP; Robert Kemp, Ryton, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE40 3EP; Paul Richardson, Hebburn, Tyne And Wear NE31 2UQ; Dominic Carter, Cleethorpes, South Humberside DN35 8QP.

EXCLUSIVE PAPER BAG OFFER
Issue 47

No, there's no solution to this puzzler – your guess is as good as a Comps Minion's when it comes to why Lloyd Mangram wears that paper bag. But five winners came up with convincing answers and each receive a hand-crafted replica of Lloyd's paper bag signed by the CRASH team.
John Alexander, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 1IZ; Darren Hewett, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 4FS; Robert Lines, Gosport, Hants PO12 2QW; Ian Watts, near Banbury, Oxon OX17 2NP; Peter Young, Saddleworth, Lancs OL3 5EG.



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